Week ending Jan. 2 1960

JOHN BULL

Everybody's Weekly

EVERY WEDNESDAY 5d

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The Alanbrooke diaries

The weather men's plan for

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BE WISE—PLAN YOUR HOLIDAY EARLY

Summer Holidays come only once a year, so they're worth choosing with care. The "John Bull" Holiday and Travel Supplement Guide on pages 23 to 37 will help you. Don't leave booking until the last minute. As a first step, write *mentioning John Bull* (or send coupon) at once to the advertisers for fullest details of their offers and services.

Free Speech

JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

The Wrong VIPs

ONE of the most unpleasant features of postwar civilization is the emergence of that strange class of people known as VIPs. Who are these important personages who get preferential treatment at airports, in planes and banquets?

Are they writers or poets or artists whose ideas have stimulated millions of minds? Are they doctors who have saved hundreds of lives?

No, they are almost exclusively smooth talkers, politicians and business men.

Why do we pay them such exaggerated homage, which they so quickly come to demand as their right?

I suggest that airlines and others concerned should think again on their assessment of the people who have done most for the community.—F. WESTON, Crofton Road, Orpington, Kent.

Magic Marg

The reader who puts butter on her bumps ("Free Speech," December 5) reminds me of a friend who stood in the local market years ago.

He made himself up as an Indian trader, complete with tanned face, topee and sideboards, selling margarine in small straw boxes as a foot salve, invaluable for sprains, stiffy joints and tired joints. His price was a shilling.

Many times he sold hundreds of boxes in one afternoon and people have been waiting for him to open up the next week, telling him how much good his salve had done.—BERT TOMLINSON, Darley Avenue, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancs.

Eternal Memory

I do not agree with those people who say that writing lines is a futile form of correction. Fifty years ago I had to stay in class and write "Lourenço Marques on Delagoa Bay" one hundred times, and that is a fact that I will never forget.

Perhaps only on the grounds of a memory exercise the repetition of the same few words should not be despised. —MRS. C. A. STEWART, Silverknowes, Loan, Edinburgh.

Optical Aids

I wonder how authors of plays and films would fare if they could not portray characters who wore glasses. The simpleton, the intellectual, the swotter, the boss crook always, it seems, wear large, thick-lensed, horn-rimmed spectacles. Steel-rimmed *pince-nez* signify a more sinister type of crook, and also the henpecked husband.

Plain glasses are a sign of the efficient, no-nonsense secretary. A fussy fop or a count wears a monocle, while disgusted dowagers sport lorgnettes.

Without optical aids these fictional creations would be almost characterless.—W. B. ROSS, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire.

Cats Can Tell

A simple explanation is given by a vet for a horse's ability to tell the time ("Free Speech," December 5). But what about the fantastic ability of our cats to tell time?

All their lives they have been cared for by a neighbour during our holidays. As soon as we leave, the cats leave our house for hers, and on the day of our return they come back.

Our holidays are not fixed, sometimes we leave in the middle of the week, sometimes at the weekend. Often our neighbour has not known on what day we would come home, yet her greeting is always the same: "I knew you were coming, the cats haven't left your front garden all day."—MRS. C. V. WATERHOUSE, Ruislip, Middx.

Easier Popping

Why do post-office letter boxes not have another slot on the other side for posting letters from the road?

If my husband has letters to post in the evening when leaving work he has to park first. If there was a slot facing the road he could post without leaving the car.

We have drive-in banks, why not drive-in letter boxes?—MRS. D. M. SAINT, Wykeham Road, Hastings, Sussex.

"We've turned down this suggestion in the past because of the accidents it could cause," says the Post Office. "Motorists might be tempted to pull across to the wrong side of the road, and children crossing to post a letter might stand in the road, instead of getting on the pavement."

Nothing But Meat

I've often wondered how lions, tigers and leopards keep in such good physical condition on a hundred per cent meat diet?

They never seem to eat fruit or vegetables. Do they suffer from deficiency diseases, or are these exclusively the heritage of human beings?—MRS. ELLA TAYLOR, Hemper Lane, Sheffield.

"Actually the big cats do get a balanced diet which contains vegetable matter," says a London Zoo spokesman. "We give ours special grasses once a week. In their natural habitat they eat grass of their own accord.

"Further vegetable matter comes from the innards of vegetarian animals like antelopes and rabbits."

Women In Focus

Recently I tried to show my wife some coloured negatives through a small hand projector. I was surprised at the difficulty she had in focusing the lens correctly.

Then I noticed that the other women to whom I showed the film had precisely the same difficulty.

All the men adjusted it to their eyes immediately. I recall that on holiday

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The Cover

Now is the time when all good children should be unseen, unheard, and tucked up in bed. She heard vague talk some days ago of getting-up-early resolutions; but perhaps one day she'll realize that nine thirty on New Year's Day after a late party is no time to start sticking to rules. Nevertheless, this pair of lay-abeds is in for a rude awakening from the daughter of the house. "She'll tell them another party awaits their attention," says Fancett. "A very hungry one"

RHYME YOUR WAY THROUGH 1960 *by Helen Morgan*

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
New Year bills, *Usual ills,* *Coughs and chills—* *General wheezing.* *Annual freezing—* *Most unpleasing.*	*Fields flooded,* *Roads muddied,* *Twigs budded!* *Gurgling drain—* *More rain . . .* *Chilblain.*	*Catkin blowing,* *Primrose showing,* *Grass growing,* *Only mean* *Women keen* *To spring clean.*	*Thrushes singing,* *Spring springing* *And bringing* *Green leaves peeping,* *Young lambs leaping,* *Old cars creeping.*
MAY	**JUNE**	**JULY**	**AUGUST**
Woodlands maying *And displaying* *Bluebells swaying . . .* *Seeds through—* *Weeds, too.* *Cuckoo!*	*Roses blooming,* *Sweet perfuming—* *Bride and grooming. . .* *Moon bright* *Warm night—* *Gnat bite.*	*Dog days—* *Heat haze.* *Displays . . .* *Gardens going* *Flower Showing . . .* *Lawnmowing.*	*Holiday guide—* *Coach ride,* *Countryside . . .* *Wind and ocean,* *See-saw motion . . .* *Sunburn lotion.*
SEPTEMBER	**OCTOBER**	**NOVEMBER**	**DECEMBER**
Hop vine, *Combine,* *Binder twine.* *Sunday rambles—* *Snatching brambles . . .* *Picnic shambles.*	*Summer dying,* *Swallows flying,* *Crisp leaves lying.* *Frosts kill—* *Wintry chill . . .* *Fuel bill.*	*Sodden soggy,* *Phantom foggy,* *Bleak and boggy—* *All neglected,* *Dull, dejected . . .* *As expected.*	*Darker, colder . . .* *Twelve months older.* *Yule logs smoulder—* *Season's Greeting—* *Families meeting . . .* *Overeating.*

the women in our party had trouble focusing field-glasses.

The mechanics of doing this are too simple to be difficult, and this seems to suggest that the eyesight of women does not focus so readily as that of men.

Perhaps this is a new light on the women car drivers controversy.—H. D., York Crescent, Aldershot, Hants.

"The reason women have difficulty doing simple things like focusing field-glasses or turning a screw has nothing to do with their eyesight," says a doctor. "The fact is that these are masculine tasks; a woman tends subconsciously to give the impression that she is helpless and therefore needs a man's help. This brings out the protective instinct in men and makes her more appealing."

In The Old Mould

From the shop windows one deduces that the keyword in the toy industry these days is plastics.

Now I wonder, who are the craftsmen who produce the original moulds or models from which the toy cars, guns, aeroplanes and trains are made?

The traditional craftsmen we know—cabinet makers, silversmiths, potters and so on—but their modern and no less skilful counterparts are apparently nameless and unknown.—J. H. MAXWELL, Hunter Crescent, Troon, Ayrshire.

"The plastic toy craftsmen are known as toolmakers and they are some of the finest, most skilled craftsmen of our age," says a toy expert.

"They don't produce a mould but a tool, a solid steel block in two halves, on the inside of which are etched the details of the toy.

"Into this is injected the plastic at a very high pressure. The average tool costs £300, but the most intricate can cost £3,000."

So Bruce Is To Blame

We have all heard, "Time, gentlemen, please! Ain't yer got no homes?" But fifty years ago an old gentleman was landlord of our local and he always called, "Bruce, gentlemen."

I have heard that the reason was that an M.P. named Bruce was responsible for the Act of Parliament which made closing of public houses compulsory. I have often wondered if this were true.—H. HOULTON, Selwyn Road, Cambridge.

"We've looked into this," says a spokesman of the Brewers' Society," and it appears that the Home Secretary at the time of the 1872 Licensing Act, which did not affect closing hours, was Lord Aberdare, family name Bruce. He ceased being Home Secretary in 1873, but it is probable that he was connected in some way with another Licensing Act of the following year. This one introduced early closing."

Put Slag To Work

Now that a national road-building programme has been embarked on, could not some use be found for the slag heaps which mar the beauty of our mining districts?

These huge heaps of rock and shale have been eyesores for years—could the Minister of Transport consider using them as a basis for our new roads?—W. SMITH, Lyell Street, Liverpool 5.

"Suitable slag is being used for new roads," says the Road Research Laboratory. "Steel slag is broken down for tar macadam roads; if colliery slag is not chemically active, and not too far away from the road, it also is used as much as possible."

Tested By Sex

I've failed three times on my driving test. The reason—I go to pieces when under the critical eye of a man. Would it be possible for me to have my test taken by a woman?—MISS V. GORE, Fleet, Hants.

"I'm afraid it is just not allowed to pick and choose your driving test examiner," says a driving instructor.

"Almost everybody who fails thinks the examiner is at fault."

Our Very Full Lives

So a reader thinks the rest of the community should subsidise people who wish to study, but who refuse to give up any of their spare time ("Free Speech," December 5).

We have three children. I work a five-day week. This winter my wife is attending two afternoon and two evening classes a week; I attend one evening class.

We still have a home life, when our relaxations include gardening, reading, chess, mah jongg, wood marquetry, tapestry, rug making, embroidery, smocking, cut linen work, and making our own wines. How do we find time? We have no television.—D. G. NOAKES, Sandhurst Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Sin's Seven Faces

I have been reading Gilbert Harding's articles on the Seven Deadly Sins of today with great interest. To my surprise, attending a wedding in a church at Linchmere in Surrey, I saw an old monument, dating back to the 13th or 14th century, which showed the sins as heads. I understand this monument originally came from France.—ARTHUR FAWCETT, The Butter Information Council, London, S.E.1.

This week Gilbert Harding writes on gluttony—page 18.

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THE two young mothers met when they were wheeling their babies in a park in the East End of London last summer. They began talking about their offspring and, within a few minutes, were discussing their respective baby carriages.

One had a pale blue and white fibreglass body, the other was lacquered in primrose, with a hand-painted eighteenth-century medallion framed in the centre.

The mothers compared values and soon disagreed. Then they measured the diameter of the wheels and the depth of the coachwork and tested the brakes. Tempers rose and a crowd collected.

Then, scathingly, the mother with the duotone baby carriage said: "Of course, yours is old fashioned. Single colours went out last season. . . ." In the end a policeman was called to separate the contestants and the case made the local newspapers.

Nobody was more pleased with this "keeping up with the Joneses" affray than the men and women who run Britain's £50 million a year baby business. Their trade is booming. Statistics covering expenditure on durable goods (apart from motor cars and houses) shows that, in his first twelve months, baby spends more than any other category of Briton in a y single year.

The last word in babies

Last year, one baby arrived in Britain every thirty-six seconds—not much more often than in previous years because the birth-rate remains steady at 750,000 per annum. But, as one maker of nursery goods said: "This baby was a very special customer. He was the last word in babies —colour-conscious, clothes-conscious, keen on new gadgets and eager to impress the neighbours. . . ."

Albert G. Dennis, secretary of Britain's Nursery Goods Association, told me: "This is the only business I know in which people tend to buy not the cheapest but the dearest. Even if they cannot out-do the neighbours themselves they will try to make sure that their babies have no equals."

One of the reasons was given by D. L. Davies, who owns ten specialist pram shops in the London area. "Babies' goods are a visible sign of respectability and affluence, and the beautiful prams lined up in the front gardens of any suburban street are a proof of that."

The owners of Britain's two thousand or more baby shops—1,500 are specialist shops and sell nothing else but baby goods—agree that baby has always, by tradition, deserved nothing but the best, although parents have not always been able to afford it.

Now, with a nation-wide boom on, babies are the first to queue up at the counters.

In six years the production of play-pens has gone up by a quarter, soft toys by a third, and

These are the essential items for a new baby

CLOTHING

	£	s.	d.
3 Wrapper vests	1	0	9
3 Nightgowns ..	1	18	3
1 Carrying shawl		17	9
3 Matinée coats	2	8	9
2 Day gowns ..	1	15	10
3 prs. Bootees ..		11	3
3 Bibs		6	0
2 doz. Turkish towelling napkins ..	3	3	0
2 doz. Muslin napkins ..	3	7	6
2 Protector rolls		3	10
1 pr. Plastic pants		1	11

OUTDOOR WEAR

	£	s.	d.
2 Pram sets (jacket, leggings,bonnet)	5	1	0
2 prs. Mittens ..		11	0
1 Headshawl ..		8	9
1 Sleeping bag	2	19	6

TOILET GOODS

	£	s.	d.
Baby soap, lotion and powder ..		5	10½
Brush and comb set ..		9	6
Safety pins ..		1	8
1 Nursing apron		19	11

BEDDING AND LINEN

	£	s.	d.
Cot	8	19	6
Mattress ..	3	2	6
3 Blankets ..	5	12	6
1 Pillow ..		15	6
2 Pillow cases ..	1	0	0
1 Quilt	3	9	6
2 Protective rubber sheets ..		13	10
2 Face towels ..		5	6
2 Bath towels ..		19	5
Cosy crib ..	5	5	0

NURSERY EQUIPMENT

	£	s.	d.
Bath and stand	4	9	0
Nappy pail ..	1	9	9
Totty pot ..		7	6
Baby basket ..	5	12	6
2 Nylon teddies	3	10	0
3 Soft toys ..	1	11	6
Baby carriage	31	19	6

Britain's Biggest Spender

there are now nine times more plastics goods in the nursery than five years ago.

One firm which three years ago began to manufacture plastic baby baths now makes 160,000 a year. Its managing director told me: "Seven years ago there were only two 'potties' on the market, one in china and the other in enamelware. Now there are around two dozen, in plastics of all colours, some with duck's-head handles, others boat-shaped and quite a few of an untippable design."

One London wholesaler who started in business after the war with two lines, a papier-mâché bath and a pot, now has six hundred lines in his warehouse and new ideas keep coming in, including a plastic play-pen shaped like a lobster pot.

Ballet theme for prams

Graeme Lines, sales director of a firm which holds roughly fifty per cent of the market in prams and pushchairs, told me: "There has been a revolution and it's been due to the young girl with a pony-tail hairdo who has graduated from buying pop records to things for her new baby. She demands colour, variety and quality, and everybody in the business has been waking up to oblige her."

Not long ago the firm launched the world's first all-fibreglass pram body, called the "Ballerina," and named individual prams Fonteyn, Markova and Giselle. One of them is described as "Flamingo coloured, majestically beautiful like muted flutes playing in the soft, velvet sunset. . . ."

Although a multitude of goods has gone into the nursery of Britain's first customer, very few new services have been devised. One idea, the nappy service, started shortly after the war, but has not yet caught on nationally. In London one of the two firms which launched the idea began in 1945 with one van, three washing machines and five employees. It now has fifteen vans, a staff of eighty and a daily delivery system. But it still numbers its customers only in the tens of thousands.

Americans in the lead

In a business which is largely fragmented and almost as diverse as a department store, few authorities are willing to put a figure on a baby's first-year expenditure, although most experts emphasize that it does not, by far, approach the official United States figure of six hundred dollars per baby-year.

In Britain's pram shops, specialists expect the average mother to spend about £20 on a pram and the same amount again on equipment, still leaving out baby linen and clothes.

In one West End store, Treasure Cot, a typical luxury-style layette works out at £24 11s. 5d., and if the suggestion list for other "indispensables" is followed through, the bill tots up to £116 7s. 11d. For this sum, one gathers, baby can move in the best circles. This again leaves out food, milk products and toilet goods, which are among the fastest expanding items in baby's shopping list.

Baby's food has become an enormous industrial

by RENÉ LECLER

continued from previous page

business. One firm, H. J. Heinz, Ltd., controls just about ninety per cent of the market and believes, not at all optimistically, that eighty per cent of Britain's babies eat strained canned food at one time or another.

Production figures are jealously guarded, but sales experts agree that one hundred cans a year per baby is not exaggerated. That is ten times more than in 1948. Cans, retailing mostly at 7½d., is good business for grocers, chemists and supermarket chiefs, who are now engaged in a merciless battle for a larger share of the market.

Food revolution

Backed by most of the country's pediatricians because it means a balanced diet, canned strained food has revolutionized baby-raising habits in Britain. Fruit juices have followed suit and one single fruit juice firm has quintupled its output in the last three and a half years.

In one West London suburb where I visited one of the newer baby shops, the owner's slogan, "Everything for the Baby," came true when we totted up his stock of 451 items, ranging from a £54 coach-built pram to a 1s. 11d. pram rattle.

I also got a good idea of how today's fond parents spend their money when a young couple entered the shop with the wife's mother in tow. The first item they looked for was the pram, a maximum of £25 to spend, the equivalent of a week and a half's wages for the husband.

Their first choice was a primrose and white pram with twenty-inch wheels and pale primrose upholstery. It was nearly sold to them, but the young wife remembered a friend telling her that summer sunshine tended to reflect the yellowy colour on to the baby's skin, a subtle effect which only a mother could detect.

Within ten minutes the family had picked a pale blue pram.

The wife insisted that delivery should not be made until after baby's arrival: "It's such bad luck to have a pram in the house beforehand. . . ."

The shopkeeper winced at this and told me: "I wish someone would put an end to this old wives' tale. It's simply impossible to keep all these prams in store."

Father then tested a play-pen by squatting inside it. Mother bought two Acrilan blankets and a pair of Terylene sheets, a wickerwork cot and a beautiful nylon cot frill (cost £5 19s. 6d.).

The grandmother-to-be dazedly roamed the shop, picking up rattles, baby mugs and eating utensils, a bath thermometer ("We used to test the water with an elbow in my day"), a squeaky rubber elephant for good luck and then splashed out on a high-chair with a removable plastic tray, remarking that "this won't be needed for some time."

Cost more than car

With purchases almost completed, the mother remembered the baby bath —again made of plastic with a captive plug for easy emptying—and Father sheepishly agreed that "we might as well have the toilet set, too."

The parents' bill came to £64 11s., which the father, a foreman in a local workshop, settled with a cheque, saying: "This little lot cost me more than the old car I bought last year. . . ."

Rubbing his hands, the shopkeeper saw his customers to the door, turned to me and said: "I hope it's a girl."

"Why?" I asked candidly.

"Well, I know this kind of family. If it's a girl they'll come back in about three years' time and buy a doll's pram, a replica of the little girl's. And they cost twelve pounds a time. . . ."

He agreed that if there was another child the parents would probably come back and buy more, although only one out of every two second babies in Britain gets a new pram.

The car age has brought in yet another change in the pram and push-chair business. Most smaller baby carriages nowadays are collapsible, with a top which can form a crib to put on the back seat of the car. Yet the fashion for the high-wheeled, over-large pram still goes on. It was started in this country in the 1860s by real coach-builders employed in making phaetons and victorias and the fame of their product has gone round the world. In the United States, for instance, a London-built pram is the height of fashion.

Graeme Lines told me: "Here, it is among the wage-earning classes that the large prams sell best of all. It's all part of the baby-deserves-the-best-and-we-can-afford-it frame of mind."

There is undoubtedly a snob value in a high-wheeled pram. The twenty-four inch wheel is a mark of class, despite the fact that the eighteen- or twenty-inch wheel is far more practical.

Styles and colours have changed with the times. One push-chair I saw had a hood and seat covered with imitation leopard skin, "just like Lady Docker's car. . . ." And most mothers now go in for pastel colours. "Twelve years ago," Graeme Lines told me, "seven-eighths of the eight hundred thousand prams and pushchairs the industry makes in a year were black and navy. Now only one in ten is in dark colours. The rest are pale blue, primrose, pink and even white with pink-rose motifs on the sides."

Prosperity, a changing pattern of living and an industry alive to its new potential customers—all these factors have changed baby's life in Britain. Pram-makers now run assembly lines, hold a pram show every year similar to the motor show at Earl's Court, and began introducing duotone prams long before the designers of Coventry and Dagenham thought of doing the same for cars.

All matched up

The demand for nursery goods from the hitherto less affluent classes has been tremendous. One East End retailer told me: "Between 1935 and 1939, I doubt if I sold more than a dozen play-pens. Certainly very few cots. Babies in those days used to be put to sleep in the bottom drawer of the family's chest of drawers. That was the traditional place. Today, for every ten mothers who come in to buy a pram, nine also buy a cot."

I asked one young mother I met in a Home Counties shop how much she and her husband had spent so far on her eight-month-old baby. She looked very hurt and replied: "It's not one of those things you count up, is it?"

Another mother had just bought a small carpet for the new nursery she had furnished in her council house. "The room is sort of pale-yellow," she told me. "You know, sunshine colour. It's been quite a job matching up everything, but now even the nappy pail is that colour."

I talked to a youngish grandmother who visited a baby shop in South London while I was there. "Have things changed? Goodness, I should say so. When I had my daughter I used to bath her in the sink in the kitchen and she slept in our bedroom on a pile of cushions until she was nine months old. Now, when my daughter baths her baby and changes him the disposable nappies are thrown away and the little mite goes to sleep in a proper cot draped with frills almost to the ceiling. Things have changed all right." But I gathered she did not disapprove.

The last *cri du coeur* in this baby boom story came from a nursery goods retailer in East London: "If only that birth-rate would increase . . . sixteen births for every thousand people in the country—it's a disgrace. Almost lower than all the other big countries. The government ought to do something about it, like increasing the family allowances, for instance."

Then, in the same breath, he added candidly: "I calculated the other day that another three births per thousand in this part of the world and I'd make an extra thousand a year." THE END

Meddling with the weather can give us everlasting sunshine . . . or wars fought with snowflakes and man-made floods

Dare we have JUNE IN JANUARY?

by JAMES CONNIFF

Phew! It's hot . . . and scientists believe this could be Britain in winter. Weather control would banish cold and fog—and revolutionize our way of life

WHILE you sleep, faces in the green glow of instruments are watching through long Arctic nights for answers. Some are American faces. Some are Russian faces.

The answers they find may determine the kind of sleep you get for a long time to come. And what is done with those answers may in the near future fulfil a dream as old as Noah: human control of the world's weather.

Russians and Americans in the Arctic are after the same thing. By artificial manipulation of the Arctic wastes they hope to warm things up in their own countries and put the weather on a predictable basis.

That means guaranteeing next week's weather, next month's, and next year's. And other countries, including Britain, would, of course, share in this better weather.

The responsibility scientists shoulder in the process is staggering. It is a small planet, after all, once you start tampering with the weather. There's more to controlling climate than assuring good holiday weather in Devon and palm trees and lower heating bills in Edinburgh.

In undertaking the gigantic projects required to bring about all these changes, any conscientious scientist must ask himself one question: what about the neighbours?

The world saw the problem two years ago in Russia's proposal to dam the Bering Strait, between Alaska and Siberia, to open up all-the-year-round Pacific ports and warm the Siberian winter.

At first it looked good to everybody. But on closer study the plan revealed a number of adverse side effects. An Arctic Ocean dam across the Bering Strait would have undeniable benefit to Siberia, but it would also invite long-range disaster for certain neighbours by boosting the flow of Arctic water across the top of America.

Disaster for farms

This would so intensify the bitterly cold Labrador Current that the Canadian maritime provinces' already short growing season would be cut sharply, with serious crop loss. A further effect would probably be the end of Halifax, Nova Scotia, as a winter port.

The dangers—and possibilities—of weather control were emphasized dramatically by the report of a committee set up by President Eisenhower. After nearly four years of intensive investigation, which opened the eyes of the experienced meteorologists among its members, the committee recommended immediate U.S. research in four areas: the sun's effect on weather, the circulation of air currents, the dynamics of cloud motion, the origin of storms.

The committee made unmistakably clear its belief that if the U.S. were to get into a weather-control race with Russia and lose it, "the results could be more disastrous than nuclear war."

That race has now started. And Russia has a long lead over America, for Soviet polar scientists are recognized as being head and shoulders above those of any other nation. This is largely because the Stalin régime and its successors long ago saw that the key to world weather is in the Arctic. To find it the Kremlin supplied money lavishly, and will continue to do so.

But what can the Russians do? How can they direct a weather disaster against others with any assurance that it wouldn't boomerang?

For that matter, how could the Russians or

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TOO MANY GHOSTS Brilliant, spine-chilling romance

DANGEROUS MIDNIGHT

It was just a guessing game of 'Who loves whom?' But it might yet explain the fearful happenings at Paradine Hall

So strange, sinister and supernatural were the occurrences at Paradine Hall that Alexander Hero had been asked there to investigate. It was not a ghost that he found—but ghosts. Too many ghosts. . . .

The range of phenomena was quite amazing—furniture hurled about by unseen hands; poltergeist tricks in the east wing, which was run as a country club; a harp playing by itself. . . . And, worst of all, the horrors that eddied around Susan Marshall, the American girl, young Beth Paradine's friend. The Paradine nun, ghostly harbinger of disaster, had woken Susan with an icy hand on her throat. A dead rabbit appeared at her place at dinner, strangling wire still around its neck. Her room had been devastated. . . .

Susan was a centre of human turmoil, too. Hero had seen the interest she aroused in Mark, Lord Paradine's heir, and in Sir Richard Lockerie, a family friend. And he had seen how Lady Paradine, the fading russet beauty, resented her son's attachment.

Too many ghosts—and a deep conflict of human feeling. Somehow Hero had to find the pattern behind the mystery. Find it before someone got hurt.

He was not alone in dark foreboding. Isobel—pale, stately sister of Lord Paradine—turned to him with the rapt eyes of an ancient prophetess.

"There's nothing you can do," she cried. "There will be a death in this house. Someone will die!"

PART FOUR

THAT same afternoon, on the way to his car to drive to East Walsham, Hero encountered two of the country club guests, Mr. Jellicot and Dr. Paulson, in a state of considerable agitation. The little scientist was pale and his fingers were working nervously. Jellicot was trembling with excitement. When he saw Hero he called out: "Mr. Hero! We have just been witness to a genuine psychical phenomenon!"

"Amazing," said Dr. Paulson.

"The poltergeist—I have an apport, a real apport! It came flying in through the window." Jellicot reached into the pocket of his coat and produced a smooth, egg-shaped flint such as abounded in the neighbourhood. "I have witnessed a poltergeist. Oh, I have never been so happy! Spendley-Carter is going to write a report on it." Jellicot's eyes were shining. "Just imagine—a poltergeist happening to a Member of Parliament, and myself there to attest it."

Hero looked to Dr. Paulson, who nodded and said: "Yes, it is true—I saw it all myself."

"What happened?"

Jellicot eagerly took up the narrative. "Doctor Paulson and I were coming from my room where I had been showing him a copy of our little spirit magazine. We were passing the Spendley-Carters' door when we heard a great crash and a scream. We rushed inside, to come upon a scene of the greatest confusion—a table at one side of the room containing books and ashtrays and things had been overturned, though no one was near it; a jug of water had been spilled on the floor; shoes and articles of clothing were flying about the room; stones were coming in the window." Mr. Jellicot held up his apport again. "Mrs. Spendley-Carter was screaming. . . ."

"Why didn't you summon me?" Hero asked, and caught the look that Jellicot and Paulson exchanged. "All right," he said, "so you wanted it for yourselves. But I'd like to remind you that I've been asked down here to rid this house of that sort of thing. Just exactly what was it you saw?"

PAULSON began: "If you will accept the testimony of one who, you must admit, is a trained observer. . . ." Hero nodded, and Paulson went on: "When we entered the room, conditions seemed indeed chaotic, with Mrs. Spendley-Carter in a state of terror, and articles strewn in confusion about the floor. A woman's shoe was flying through the air just as we entered. . . ."

Hero interrupted. "Whose shoe was it? Mrs. Spendley-Carter's, or the child's, or a strange shoe?"

Paulson suddenly looked nonplussed.

"I thought you were a trained observer," said Hero. "Go on—where was everyone at this time?"

"Mrs. Spendley-Carter was over by the mantelpiece with her face in her hands, moaning. Spendley-Carter was standing next to her."

"And where was the child?"

"I know what you are thinking," said Jellicot, "but it was impossible for her to have been involved in any way. She was sitting in an alcove at the other side of the room with her back to us."

"What was she doing?"

"She was painting in her water-colour book."

"With all that row going on?"

Paulson said: "I had her under observation all the time, as well as everyone else in the room. The apport—that is, the stone Mr. Jellicot has—came flying in through the window, the one nearest the alcove."

Hero asked: "Was the window open or shut?"

Dr. Paulson said: "The window was shut. I examined it after the object had passed over my shoulder and landed upon the floor."

"How long ago was this?" Hero asked.

"About half an hour."

Hero was angry and frustrated. He picked up the stone and weighed it in his hand. It appeared to be an ordinary Norfolk flint, but the trail would be cold now, and so was this piece of rock; it could tell nothing to the little instrument he had in his pocket. If only he had been there when it landed, or immediately after!

He again weighed the stone in his hand and asked Paulson: "Do you believe that an

Lady Paradine's mood flung her husband into a panic. "But I've always loved you, my dear," he said. "I do now, don't I?"

by PAUL GALLICO

Too many ghosts

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inanimate object such as this can fly through the air of its own volition?"

"I saw it do so," the scientist replied stiffly.

"Not of its own volition," Jellicot tried to explain helpfully. "It is the invisible poltergeist who carries it."

Dr. Paulson was growing angrier. "As a psychical researcher, sir, you ought to know how to evaluate evidence from competent sources. I am telling you what I saw. Do you doubt my word?"

Hero contemplated the flint for another moment before he replied morosely: "No, not your word, but your common sense."

He went out, got into his car and drove off towards East Walsham.

Hero had decided that now was the time to call in his step-sister Meg. She had helped him already with some valuable social background on the Paradines. Now he needed her cameras —and her encouragement.

Reaching East Walsham, he drew up at the post office and telephoned Meg at Barbizon's studio.

"Are you all right?" was the first thing she asked.

"Yes. Look here, Sis, you'll be getting an invitation shortly from our red-haired friend down here. When it arrives take-off on the double, old girl."

Meg said: "Oh, that's how it is. Anything particular in equipment?"

"We'll want the lot. Your subject has a preference for dark corridors."

"What about the poltergeist?"

"Yes, yes! By all means! We'll have Little Snooper," Hero said.

Something in his tone worried Meg. She said, "You sound disturbed, my pet. Are you in trouble?"

Hero said: "This place is positively crawling with ghosts, if you happen to like them in crowds, which I don't. And there's been the usual prophecy of doom and death, with always the unpleasant possibility that someone might help the prophecy along."

"I asked if *you* were in trouble," Meg said, with emphasis. "Are you surrounded by beautiful women?"

Hero replied, "Inundated."

"Just what I thought," Meg said. "You be careful. . . ."

After promising lightly that he might, Hero came out into the sunshine and sized-up the village, charmingly located on the shimmering Walsham Broads. He went to St. Dunstan's Church, with its facings of half-flints; the same kind of flint pebbles, he mused, as had materialized through a closed window at the Hall.

The vicar was not there. Instead, Hero found a verger. The old fellow was a first-class antiquarian and historian, and he showed Hero some six minutely written notebooks with information about the Paradines and other great families of the district.

Later on, Hero visited the public library, where there were further rewarding records, and finally he drove over to Great Yarmouth, where he paid a visit to the hydrographic officer for the district. It was late afternoon by the time he had finished and returned, full of disturbing thoughts.

Almost without realizing it, he let the Bentley drift to a stop on the broad main drive leading to Paradine Hall, and sat eyeing the stately mass of the great Tudor building.

WHILE sitting there he became aware of being watched. Some part of somebody was showing from behind the grey-green skin of a centuries-old elm tree.

"Come out, come out, wherever you are," he sang.

Twelve-year-old Noreen Spendley-Carter appeared diffidently from behind the tree. She came forward, eyeing the car admiringly, then put forth a somewhat grubby hand and with astonishing gentleness touched it.

"Could I sit in it just once for a little?" she begged.

"Certainly," Hero replied. He leaned over and opened the offside door.

Inside she stretched and sighed as luxuriously as a young kitten. "Oh," she breathed. "It's just like a dream."

"Shhh," Hero whispered, "you must try not to wake up, then."

She sat up and looked at him now with more interest. "Oh," she said, "you know that, too? Sometimes when I'm having the best dream, I try ever so hard not to wake up."

"What kind of dreams?" Hero asked her.

She became slightly wary. "Oh, things," she said. And then added half to herself: "Like being a nurse in a hospital and wearing a white cap and holding a thermometer."

"That's a nice dream," Hero said.

The girl turned her dark eyes upon him and Hero was aware of something touching in their depths. She said: "But I always wake up." Then she asked: "What are you really doing here?"

Hero answered her frankly. "I am trying to find out about ghosts."

Noreen asked: "But what is there to find? A ghost is or isn't, isn't it?"

Hero smiled and said: "It depends. Do you believe in ghosts?"

"Of course I do. My ghosts are all 'is' ones. I love them—they make me feel all squiggly and shuddery inside."

"Are you afraid of them?"

"Of course not. They aren't solid."

"Even those who knock vases over and throw stones?"

"Pooh," said Noreen, scornfully. "They never hit anybody."

"They frighten your mother."

A curious expression that Hero could not fathom came into the child's face. There was a quickening of interest. She said: "Oh, Mother's afraid of everything, including Daddy. She hates Daddy. They're not my real Daddy and Mummy, you know—I'm adopted."

Hero turned to look at the girl and said: "I see. When did you find out?"

"Not long ago," Noreen said. "They were having a row. I listened at the door. Daddy said Mummy was so rotten lazy and self-centred that she wouldn't even have a child, and Mummy said that she didn't want *his* because he was mean, vain, a liar and a big windbag, and that was why she adopted one. And Daddy said: 'Well, I hope you're satisfied with what you've got now. Look at her—me a Member of Parliament having to go about meeting people, and she's a disgrace to have to take along as our daughter.' That's me," Noreen concluded without rancour.

Hero kept his face expressionless and merely said: "Are you sorry that they're not your real parents?"

Noreen gave some thought to this before she replied: "No, I'm glad, because I'm not them at all, am I—not the littlest bit? I'm just me, me, me!"

Hero felt overwhelmed with grief at the bleakness and gallantry of this declaration. "Yes, you are you," he said, "and never forget it, Noreen."

They sat there for a while in silence. Then Noreen said: "Lean down, I want to whisper something." Hero leaned his head close and heard her say quietly: "I want to be a nurse when I grow up."

"Then you shall," he declared. But he saw the sudden anguish in her eyes.

"But they won't let me," she wailed. "I hate them!"

She jumped out and ran off, leaving Hero sitting alone silently smoking and thinking and looking after her until she was out of sight.

BY the time Hero arrived back at the Hall and parked his car, tea outdoors was almost over and there were only Cousin Freddie, Beth and Mark left on the lawn. Simultaneously, Sir Richard and Susan, clad in shorts and sweaters, approached from the boathouse.

The little eyes in Freddie's fat face shone with happy malice as he noted fresh arrivals to bait. "Ah, there," he cried, "how's the super spooker today? Spot of tea to keep up the courage?"

"Thanks," Hero said.

Susan and Sir Richard arrived, both roaring with laughter at a joke that had been between them. Hero said: "Well, what have you two been up to?"

"Dinghy racing," Sir Richard replied. "Susan has beaten me again."

Beth said: "Oh, Susan always wins."

She smiled as she spoke, but Hero thought that a slightly jarring note struck his ear. Was it simply the speech of a girl pleased and proud of her friend, or was there something else?

If there was, the keen, malicious ear of Cousin Freddie likewise seemed to have tuned in.

He said: "Ah-ah there, Beth. What's this? Jealous of your girl friend—and your Uncle Dick?"

A teacup and saucer clattered to the turf as Beth arose, her face drained of all colour, her eyes brimming and her young mouth twisted. "Oh!" she cried. "You beast—you unspeakable beast!" Then she turned and ran off to the house weeping into her hands.

Mark Paradine said icily: "You're a dirty swine, Freddie. Can't you see the kid's been under a strain with all this business happening to Susan? Why do you have to pick on her?"

Sir Richard advanced, his handsome face crimson with fury. "I ought to smash that fat head of yours."

"That's it," said Freddie cheerfully, "show the girl your muscles."

It was so ridiculous that Susan broke the tension with a roar of laughter. "Oh, Freddie," she said, "you're priceless." Then: "No tea for me. I'm going to change."

"I'll walk back with you," Hero said.

ONCE they were out of earshot of the rest, Hero said: "I think it's about time for that little experiment."

Susan said: "You mean the one you said was not very pleasant. I don't like things that are unpleasant."

Hero said: "No one does. Yet it's not very pleasant either to be attacked by something in the dark and not know what it is, is it? Or to have to consider that it might happen again, perhaps in even less pleasant form, unless I can stop it? And I might not be able to unless I am sure."

Susan said: "I see. What will it consist of?"

Hero thought carefully before he spoke, and then replied: "Your going to bed tonight, leaving your door unbolted and going to sleep. At some time during the night the exact same thing will happen to you—or at least I hope it will be the exact same thing—but with one important difference. This time it will be me."

Susan turned her cool, frank, open gaze full upon Hero and said succinctly: "I don't like men in my room at night." But the trouble was, she realized, that the thought of Hero being there disturbed and excited her.

The investigator simply nodded and said: "Don't undress—just lie on top of the bed with your clothes on."

Susan asked him: "And should your experiment succeed, will you be any farther forward?"

Hero suddenly grinned at her. "Oh, lots," he said. "We can stop worrying about that phenomenon."

"I don't see why."

"Anything I can reproduce," Hero replied cheerfully, "we don't worry about any more. Then it becomes merely a question of who and why."

Susan tried to digest the logic of this, and failed. "I don't see that that proves anything," she said, "just because you are able to do what a ghost can do—if it is a ghost."

"Exactly," Hero said, "if it is a ghost. The point is, if it is, it ought to be able to do things that I am not able to do. All my professional life I have tried to find a ghost that *can* do something that I can't. So far I have found them singularly restricted."

"Oh!" said Susan suddenly, "and you're hoping it might be mine! I am to be the guinea-pig."

Hero regarded her coolly and silently for a moment, and then said simply: "Going to play?"

Susan struggled within herself. *He's heartless*, she thought. *He's using me. Why don't I say no? Oh, why is he so*

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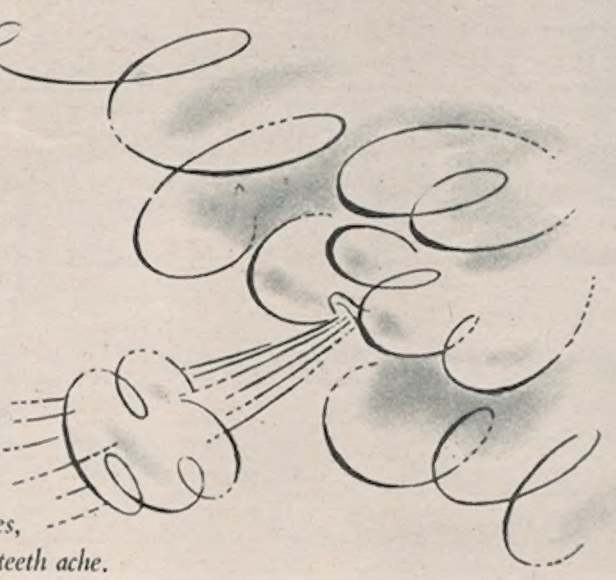
WINTER WIND



Wild wind, wantoning at wash-day weddings
Of pantaloons and pinafores,
Filling billowing pillow-case bellies, paunching pants.
Tangling girls' curls,
Wrapping trousers round legs, belling respectable skirts,
Reversing umbrellas, hustling cloud fleeces into fold,
Shaking snowflake ballet, trumpeting in towers and turrets,
Racketing on roofs with a rattle of slates and tiles,
Muttering in shutters, whistling at street-corners,
Breathing through key-holes, distributing drops on noses,
Flailing pale cheeks, making teeth ache.
Spring sun routs the roisterer,
Ending this tale of a gale.

RUBY PAQUET-BERRY

The hard way to FIRESIDE FAME

Muriel Young, Associated-Rediffusion announcer, in the small studio where she reads her notices and waits for emergencies. She shares the cramped, box-like room with a remote-controlled camera, a monitor screen, a microphone—and, most important of all, a clock

So you want to be a TV announcer. First you need the right face, voice, memory—then stamina

by JOHN ENNIS

A FEW months ago the B.B.C. advertised for two new television announcers. Replies came from 1,500 people. These were reduced to a short list of twenty-five. Not one was found suitable.

Many viewers are convinced that television announcers have the world's easiest job, one that anybody can do. Recently Dick Norton, an announcer for the Associated-Rediffusion television company, was with a group of friends when one said: "Dick, we know you are an announcer—but what do you do for a *living?*"

Though the announcer's job looks simple, the qualifications demanded by television companies seem high enough to put the successful announcer in line for a seat in the Cabinet. Clive Rawes, head of the B.B.C. Presentation Department, which controls announcers, says: "The announcer must have a good speaking voice, a good appearance, a good memory, a good general education, a knowledge of languages, be well travelled and have enough general knowledge to pronounce Abergele as Abergelly and not Abergeel."

Announcer Mary Malcolm, addressing a rotary club some years ago, added: "Infinite patience, a sense of humour, ability to 'cope,' ability to bluff, and good looks."

No settled method of discovering these qualities in candidates has yet been found by television bosses. One company has tested novices by taking them to a lake and inviting them to give an interesting commentary on the placid scene before them. McDonald Hobley, once the most famous of B.B.C. announcers, was made to run up and down a spiral staircase at his audition; he has never discovered why.

Some announcers have to worry their way into the job. Richard Baker, B.B.C. newsreader, was

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NO PLACE LIKE

How those two children of Janet's hated me! Please believe that normally I'm not the sort of man children run screaming from and dogs bare their teeth at. But for them I was the intruder.

After the break-up of her first marriage, Janet had tried to be both father and mother to them —over-tried, in fact, and over-succeeded. She had bound the three of them in a tight little cocoon of interdependence.

At the time of Janet's marriage to Jack Bedford, I'd gone abroad. I'd been very fond of Janet, but along came Bedford, swept her off her feet and married her. It hit me pretty hard at the time. I didn't even come back to England for my leaves. But now my tour of duty overseas was finished and I had come back to take up a senior position at head office.

Even then I didn't intend to look up Janet. But by chance I heard two women chattering in a restaurant and Janet's name was mentioned. I gathered that Bedford had left her after she'd had a couple of children by him. He had gone off with some other woman and there had been a divorce.

For the sake of what had been I looked up Janet in case I could be of help, but the girl I had known had gone and instead there was a worried, depressed little woman with an air of failure about her. She was almost resentful; things had been all right for me, while she had had the sticky end.

I met the children. They were nicely spoken and well behaved, but they clung over-much to mother, and she decided everything for them.

Next time Janet was more prepared, and we were on easier terms. I found her obsessed with failure, terrified that, just as she had lost Jack Bedford's love, so she would lose the love of her two children.

I could have told her that whatever love Mr. Bedford had was reserved strictly for himself. It had been a miracle that Janet had held him in rein as long as she had.

Over many months I decided I was going to marry Janet and this time there was going to be no slip-up. I had no silly notion of putting the clock back. Janet and I were two entirely different people now, but I was sure that we could make a go of it.

She was horrified when I proposed, and went into a panic. She hadn't the gift of making a man happy, she said. She'd already made a mess of one marriage. Then there were the children, who were devoted to her and depended on her for everything.

"Oh, I don't know what to do," she wailed.

"Then I'll decide for you," I said, which is what I ought to have done all those years ago. "You'll marry me and like it." And I took her into my arms and that was that.

But the children were certainly a problem. When they hadn't realized what was happening and I'd just been a friend of the family, we'd all got along very well together. But there must have been a terrible scene when Janet told them. Janet was almost for giving the whole thing up.

"They think I've ratted on them," she said, "sold myself for a houseful of washing-machines, spin-driers and television sets. I had to try to convince them that I was really and truly in love with you. They couldn't understand how two old people like us could be in love. But finally they said that, if that was what I wanted, then they'd have to sacrifice themselves to me, although things would never be the same again."

"And a jolly good job too," I said brutally. "It's bad for people to shut themselves away together—especially young people."

Janet and I were married quietly and had a month abroad. We returned to a harrowing reunion. I remained in the background, just casting a gloom.

I had decided my plan of action. The children were at an awkward age, too old to cajole with sweets, and too young to have a showdown.

The boy wasn't an immediate problem—he was going away to a boarding school very shortly. The girl, Ann, was to be coped with first.

I was determined not to rush things. Janet made frantic attempts to bring us together, trying to demonstrate that her love for young Ann was no less, and that Ann must love me for mother's sake. I told her to drop it, that the children and I must take to each other direct and not because of a third party. She was hurt.

The boy went off to school. I arranged a business engagement that prevented me going to see him off. I knew what he would have felt, looking back to see his mother with another man by her side.

Ann went off to day school and tried to divorce herself from the pair of us by going to her room each evening.

"Don't you like television?" I said one evening.

"Some of it," she said.

"Why don't you come down, then?"

Ann's face went tense. "You'd sooner be alone together."

"I'd sooner we were all three together," I said.

She gave me a searching look.

"It's a fact," I said. "But please yourself."

That evening the door opened and she came in and sat very primly on the edge of a distant chair. She seemed surprised that Janet and I weren't huddled together in one of the big armchairs. Presently she sat on the arm of her mother's chair and they whispered and laughed

Trying to be a father to young Ann had its problems. She fo[illegible] for[illegible] ye[illegible] dar[illegible] marry her mother.

IT

by JOHN NIELD

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HESELTINE

The very first time we were alone I realized that Ann was the sort of girl who can order the male animal about

No place like it

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together. Ann shot me puzzled glances at times. Afterwards she told Janet that she thought I was a very dull person indeed.

I'd formed the impression that Ann was a very independent young woman at heart. She must have found the restraining influence of her mother's constant attention more than a little irksome. I persuaded Janet to give the girl more freedom and encourage her to mix more with girls of her own age.

"You can't make people fond of you by never letting them out of your sight," I said. "Affection is its own bond and requires no other."

So young Ann went skipping off gaily with girls of her own age and started to bloom like a young rose.

Then Janet had an unexpected summons to her sister, who had been taken suddenly ill. There was great excitement before we could persuade her to go. We bundled her into a taxi, still protesting, and looked at each other.

"Mother does flap," said Ann.

"We are instructed to go and collect Mrs. Jackson, the daily help," I said.

"Blow Mrs. Jackson," said Ann. "We can manage without her."

"How do we eat?" I said. "Out of tins, or do we just go out?"

"Whichever you please," said Ann. She added loftily: "I can cook."

"Can you?" I said doubtfully.

"I'm a jolly good cook," she exclaimed indignantly.

"You'd better go to it, then."

She went and inspected the larder. "I shall want things," she said.

"Shopping," I groaned.

She nodded. "Get the car."

I grinned. Ann's the sort of girl who can command the male animal about. We went shopping.

"Do you want a hand?" I said when we returned.

"No," she replied. "That's the worst of Mother, she will keep butting in. I can manage better on my own."

"It's all yours," I conceded.

She produced a surprisingly good meal. Basically she was a far better cook than Janet.

I'd bought a box of chocolates down town and afterwards I presented them. "For the cook," I said.

We washed up together and had great fun. And afterwards we watched telly and she sat companionably on the arm of my chair.

ANN and I had a wonderful time for the next fortnight. Sometimes I took her out to a meal for a break, and then she came all over grown-up and I treated her as such.

We were on the best of terms when Janet returned.

"How have you been managing?" she asked, in tones which said: *Tell me the worst, you poor dears.*

"Oh, all right," I said.

"I've been doing all the cooking, haven't I?" said Ann proudly. "It's been jolly good, too, hasn't it?"

"Not too bad," I said. "Now hop it, and mind it's something special."

"Oh, no," said Janet, scrambling up. "Mummy will do it, darling."

"Sit down," commanded Ann sternly and Janet obeyed.

"You seem to be getting on very well," she said, after Ann had gone.

"If you mean, have we missed you, of course we have," I said. "But Ann likes doing things for herself, Janet. Let her make her own way."

"I hope it'll be a better way than the one I made," said Janet. "That's what I wanted to guard her against."

"She must make her own mistakes for herself," I said. "And, Janet, she wants to meet her father again."

"And have him coax her away from me?" said Janet. "You don't know how charming he can be."

"I've got an idea," I said bitterly. "But he's her father and you'll have to risk it."

Eventually Janet agreed and arrangements were made. Janet took Ann to where Jack was living, although she didn't go in herself.

Ann came to me that evening. She was very quiet.

"Are they worth a penny?" I said.

"I don't know," she said and was quite grown-up for the while. "I'm glad I saw Father. He wasn't a bit like I remembered. I thought of him as big and jolly, but instead he was just fat and rather foolish. I think he'd been drinking and he kept saying the same silly thing over and over again. And that dreadful woman with her loud, common laugh. Fancy leaving Mother for her! I never want to see him again."

"It isn't as simple as that," I said. "He's your father. That isn't a tie you can ever entirely break, you know."

"It's funny you should realize that," she said. "I haven't even told Mother this, but suddenly, as I was leaving, I couldn't stop having some strange sort of love for him. It was then I kissed him and said goodbye."

We sat in silence.

"All those years," she said eventually, "I've thought of him; sometimes I've hated him, sometimes I've wanted him back. Now I don't want to see him again—ever."

"You'll feel better about it presently," I consoled. She kissed me.

"Thank you for being you," she said.

YOUNG John was due back from school. He was coming home from his first term in a wholly masculine society, and I knew that things would be different with him.

It was soon evident that John intended to bury himself in his school life and to look on his vacations as so many weeks of dreary penance. He was formal with me and called me "sir" and was awkward with his mother. She was frantic, and all her old doubts returned. She went into an excess of affection to win back her "little boy," and it left him wriggling and sheepish.

She even trotted out a pet name she had for him—"Mimsi." Each time she used it now it made him wince.

I told Janet to drop it.

"He doesn't want a woman 'Mimsi-ing' all over him," I said.

"I'm not a woman," said Janet, offended. "I'm his mother."

"Worse still," I said. "Don't forget that, as his mother, you're on trial. A boy at his first school gets a glimpse of other chaps' parents and their home life, and it makes him compare them with his own. No chap could go back to school with any self-respect knowing his mother was still thinking of him as her little Mimsi."

"You're a hard-hearted brute," Janet stormed, and then gave an agitated wail. "No, I didn't mean that, Bill."

"For heaven's sake, woman," I said, "say it *and* mean it. Of course I am. It's for your own good—and don't look as if I'm going to walk out."

"Jack did," she said.

"This isn't Jack, it's Bill," I said. "Have some spirit, girl. You bawl straight back that if you want to call him Mimsi you will, so there."

"But I'm so frightened, Bill," she said, clinging to me. "I've lost confidence in myself. I feel I can never

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It's So Hard To Tell

Oh! tall she was, and poised and cool,
With skin like flawless silk,
And eyes not born to sue, but rule;
A throat as white as milk.

Oh! graceful were her limbs, her hands
Were mystic in repose,
And rare with balms of far-off lands,
Of jasmine, musk and rose.

In crowded Tube my gaze shone warm,
Her eyebrows rose a trifle.
And clear her perfect lips let form,
"'Av yer 'ad yer flippin' eyeful?"

ANDREW FLINT

PERSONAL COLUMN

MABEL. In town again. Same place, Monday. Sid.

RUTH. In town again. Same place, Tuesday, Sid.

ALICE. In town again. Same place, Wednesday. Sid.

YOUR 1960 daffodils may be flattened by hovercraft. Insure now with Aeroports and General.

WIDOWER (65), with unique collection of milk churns and dredger buckets, would like to meet young widow with similar tastes. JB 101.

FRIENDS of Great Western Railway will meet for readings from Bradshaw's Guide in the Waiting-room, Platform Two, Swindon, on 15th at 7 a.m. Bring own coal.

THE advertiser who offered a delightful b/sit. at Ealing wishes to state that he meant a bed-sitting-room, not a baby-sitter.

IMPOVERISHED nobleman, unable to unload estate on National Trust, would welcome proposals from principals of nudist camps and gambling hells. JB 102.

I, CLARENCE BONES, of Myholme, Buttercup Drive, Addlebury, regret that in the sound track of my holiday movie, "Seagulls Over Swanage," two bars from "Wuff Wuff Boogie" were included without permission from Messrs. Leadenfoot, Gripegutz and Fuseman, music publishers, to whom I

E. S. TURNER

In Reply To Your Advertisement . . .

Dear Pete,

You bet I want to master the SCIENCE OF SELF-DEFENCE in a few weeks in the privacy of my own home. Rush me your WORLD CHAMPION home boxing tutor and I understand if I am not DELIGHTED with my progress in a month I can claim a FULL REFUND of my money without obligation of any kind. You see, Pete, six months ago I was a SKINNY WEAKLING and REAL HE-MEN used to push me around when I was trying to make time with a girl. So I got you to rush me your WORLD CHAMPION home weight-lifting set and in a few weeks I was AMAZED to find I had a BODY LIKE YOURS, with the muscles girls go for. But when I went up to a WEEDY YOUTH who was with a girl and said: "Hey, SLIM, beat it!" instead of SLINKING AWAY he punched me on the nose and knocked me down before I knew what was happening. The girl he was with didn't admire my biceps, Pete, she just SNEERED and called me a MUSCLE-BOUND APE, so you see I need your boxing tutor at once so I can learn to HOLD MY OWN. . . .

PATRICK GOLDRING

I Hope I'm Not Breaking Up The Party

At 10 p.m.
Toward bed I trot.
The night is young,
But I am not.

RICHARD ARMOUR

English At Oh! Level

Bulwark. . . . *Well-worn path near cowshed.*
Falter. . . . *Line judge at Wimbledon.*
Brandish. . . . *Bowl for feeding fowls.*
Hopscotch. . . . *Kentish whisky.*
Counterfeit. . . . *Shop assistant's fallen arches.*
Euthanasia. . . . *Russian teenager.*
Inquire. . . . *Public bar glee club.*
Horticulture. . . . *Training course for debs.*
Departmental. . . . *Go round the bend.*
Horological. . . . *Understandable terror.*
Laplander. . . . *Career girl leaving no stone unturned.*
Knighthood. . . . *Sleeping cap.*

RONALD A. SLINN

After 400

years darts now

aims high—and scores

a big hit with millions in

homes, ships, pubs and palaces

The craze that's come to stay

by ALEX LANCASTER

BEFORE the royal tour of Australia in 1954, Buckingham Palace officials hinted to Australia House in London that one small item of equipment would be much appreciated by Prince Philip: a dart board.

This titbit of information was sent "down under" and dart boards began to appear in the government houses where the royal party was expected to stay.

Australians were not too surprised to hear of Prince Philip's appreciation of darts. Lady Slim, wife of Sir William Slim, the governor-general, is fond of throwing darts at a board hung in Government House, Canberra.

In fact, the humble English game of darts, which began as an indoor variation of archery in the sixteenth century, has been acquiring higher social status for some years. It is now played regularly by more than four million men and women in pubs and homes all over Britain.

"Many exclusive London clubs now possess a board," says Frank Lowy, a London darts manufacturer. In 1937, Lowy was a consulting engineer when he began making darts with a capital of £6. Last year, his factory produced more than three million darts. A third of them were exported.

A modern dart is a steel arrow embedded in a shaft of brass or wood and flighted with plastic or goose or turkey feathers. The circular board, two inches thick and with a diameter of eighteen inches, is usually made of elm, compressed paper, on bristle.

The segments, which are numbered one to twenty, are marked out with wire and shrewdly placed so that, in aiming for a big number, a player risks hitting smaller numbers on either side.

The smaller of two central rings, or "bulls," counts fifty and the outer scores twenty-five. A player scores double if he lands his dart in a double ring of wires, three-eighths of an inch wide, round the outer edge of the board. He gets a treble if he hits another narrow ring nearer the "bull."

In a normal game, players throw alternately, three darts each, and the winner is the one who starts and finishes on a "double" in scoring

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What a terrible task for an injured boy—to run against a professional for the future of the town!

The Soda Race

by WILLIAMS FORREST

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

It was night when young Tad arrived at the outskirts of the town after a day's wagon trip over the plain. There were camp fires on the prairie near the livery stable. Tad was surprised at the number of wagons and people; he hadn't seen so many here since the big Fourth of July foot race that he had won.

He strolled around curiously and was shocked to find that the people were not shoppers or families that had come to town for a big event; they were some of the settlers who were leaving for the east, abandoning their homesteads. He found that they were here to barter, buy and exchange for equipment and provisions for the journey.

He thought that the dread of another winter was chilling their hearts in advance, and so was the memory of the spring drought. Last winter the cold and the blizzard had made poor animals of everyone on the homesteads, forcing them to hide in their houses, gnawing on the small portions of food that they could afford to eat.

In Tad's own dim turf home, during that winter, his pa had stared often into space and then spoken, always in the same words: "Someday this land will be rich; there'll be grain and animals and homes, with trees and gardens. It'll be smiled on. It's only holdin' back to test us." He would nod. "There's a test for every man. I sure do believe that and that's what I intend to put my faith on."

Tad had pride and belief in Pa's words. That's why he was here at the town. This was the time when Pa and Joe, Tad's brother-in-law, had promised they would be home from the work they had gone to get in the north, on the ranches or on the railroad or in the timberlands. They had been gone for three months and hope of keeping the homestead depended on whether they had found work for a sufficient time and for enough money.

Tad, the thirteen-year-old boy, had spent those three months preparing for the winter. He had made four six-day journeys for wood and had spent four days at the mill to obtain flour and had had to work for distant neighbours, building and hauling, in order to supplement the supplies the men had been able to leave.

These, with other chores, had tired him, and one day, to his horror, while cutting the wood to size for the stove and fireplace he had felt a pause in himself, even as he watched the axe descend, and the blade had cut into his boot and foot.

He had not told his mother and sister of what had happened; he had taken care of his cut foot as best he could. It was a two-day journey to a doctor and there was no money for treatment anyway. He sewed his boot with a thong and caked the area with mud so no one could see the slice.

Then his work had been done, except for the hope the women had that he would find oil for lamps, and every day he walked out on the prairie with his gun, feeling guilty because he was not still hard at work, as the women were.

One morning he killed a plump skunk and took the animal home and rendered from it nearly two quarts of heavy oil. Ma was so happy that she wrung her dry cracked hands, and then kissed him on the cheek. "Hannah," she said to Tad's sister, "Hannah, we can make hussy lamps. I declare, we'll be able to eat dinner with lamplight, when the men come home."

Hannah was slender and faintly stooped. Her hair was light and soft and her eyes were a tremendous blue, as if somehow she always contained a portion of summer behind them. Smiling, she began to make lamps, getting sand and putting it in the bottom of metal containers and pouring the oil into the sand and above it, and then putting in the wicks that she had already made, in fond hope.

Ma watched her, but her smile dimmed. "I warrant they'll bring home money," she said. "I warrant that." But her voice was unsure. She was hopeful but hesitant, because on the prairie life was so stern. Hope could seem like a wisp against a tornado or a blizzard or a plague of locusts. But she held herself erect, and insisted: "I just know they will, and I only wish we had some soda to make biscuits." Her eyes, that were like Hannah's, but not so brilliant, shone. "Soda," she said, as if naming an impossible wonder of the earth. "Baking soda. That's what I would like."

Hannah stood up from the table and walked around the room, slender hands clasped behind her back, nodding and dreaming too, as Tad watched. "If they come back with lots of money, with maybe a hundred dollars—Ma, we should have a feast!"

Ma said, enchantedly: "Chicken, biscuits, white biscuits, real biscuits, and gravy!"

Hannah said: "Oh!"

Ma hugged herself. "We got two chickens. We got two chickens."

Hannah looked at her. Her voice, too, was triumphant. "And we got the eggs we been saving. We can barter."

Ma's eyes fell on Tad. It had been he who had had to do most of the shopping in town. The women loved to go, but they had no time for it usually. "Tad, what's the price of baking soda?"

"Dozen eggs," he said, "if it's eggs you got to barter."

The price was very definite. He had been in the store once when a customer had come in with ten eggs. Trellis, the storekeeper, had tried to talk in a low voice so the rest of the people hanging around wouldn't hear. But the woman with the eggs hadn't kept her voice down.

"I got only two less than you want," she said. "Only two. Give me enough soda for that, then."

"Can't break it up. Can't break the barter."

"Why not?"

"Then we'd be breaking everything up around here," Mr. Trellis had said. "You can't break money prices in half, so you can't break barter in half. People come in, they want a dozen eggs. Nobody ever come in here for eight eggs, and nobody ever will. Even if you want to borrow two eggs, I won't. You can borrow a whole dozen, if you've got farm credit, if you've brought in a crop, and we know for sure you're going to stay."

Mr. Trellis was very firm about farm credit; for over a year now people had been running away from the prairie, from their failure, and when they left they could not pay him. . . .

In the turf farmhouse, Ma said: "Tad, you said a dozen eggs?" She was excited. "Hannah, the men will be home any day now. Any day. And we're going to have that feast. How many eggs we got saved?"

All of them knew, but Hannah hesitated and counted a moment in her mind. Then she said: "We got eleven."

Ma beamed. "Maybe tomorrow we'll have a dozen." She turned to Tad, and her flushed expression softened and held pity, for she knew how hard he had worked. But then she stiffened, because it was his place to work, as it was

"Set!" shouted the starter. There was a long moment of suspense as the pistol was pointed into the bland sky. And then came the shot . . .

Arthur Bryant

TRIUMPH IN THE WEST

Completing the War Diaries of Field Marshal Viscount Alanbrooke

The Americans withdraw in the Ardennes. Montgomery, who wired Brooke about "lack of grip and control," was given command of the northern front

THE ALANBROOKE DIARIES

PART FIVE

Disaster in the Ardennes

Hitler, it seemed, was staking all on one desperate gamble. Now the stunned Americans reeled in retreat—on the brink of victory

IN the letter Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, C.I.G.S., had received from Montgomery, written on November 17, 1944, the latter reported that he had neither seen nor spoken to his chief on the telephone since October 18, and had met him only four times since the end of the Normandy campaign.

"He is at Forward Headquarters at Rheims," he wrote. "The directives he issues from there have no relation to the practical necessities of the battle. It is quite impossible for me to carry out my present orders. . . .

"Eisenhower should himself take a proper control of operations or he should appoint someone else to do this. If we go drifting along as at present we are merely playing into the enemy's hands and the war will go on indefinitely. . . . He has never commanded anything before in his whole career; now, for the first time, he has elected to take direct command of large-scale operations and he does not know how to do it.

"The Germans," Montgomery continued, "are bound to bring divisions to the Western Front —from Norway, from the Russian front and from

Triumph in the west

continued from previous page

elsewhere. . . . Bradley tells me the American ammunition situation is going to be worse and his allotment is already being scaled down. So the urgency to finish the German war quickly is very great."

The only way, Montgomery thought, to achieve this was to "concentrate great strength at some selected place and hit the Germans a colossal crack, and have ready the fresh divisions to exploit the success gained."

Montgomery, after discussing the matter with Portal, sent home by him a further letter.

"The whole problem here . . . can really be solved very simply by having a proper organization for command. Within the American armies they seem to have a curious idea that every army commander must have an equal and fair share of the battle. . . . I do not believe we shall ever get a land commander. I have offered in writing to serve under Bradley, but it is no use; Ike is determined to do it himself. . . ."

"I suggest the answer is this:

"1. Ike seems determined to show that he is a great general in the field. Let him do so and let us all lend a hand to pull him through.

"2. The theatre divides itself naturally into two fronts—one north of the Ardennes and one south.

"3. I should command north of the Ardennes and Bradley south of the Ardennes.

"4. Ike should command the two fronts, from a suitable tactical headquarters, having the air C.-in-C. with him—who must be Tedder. . . ."

Brooke did not agree and replied on the twenty-fourth:

". . . As regards your letter, frankly I don't think much of your plan! You have always told me, and I have agreed with you, that Ike was no commander, that he had no strategic vision, was incapable of making a plan or of running operations when started.

"Now you state that: 'This solution is so very simple and would solve all problems. Ike would allot forces to each front as demanded by his plan.' How is he to do this if he can't make a plan?

"Furthermore, you are asking for the command of the Northern Group. You must remember that you have repeatedly affirmed that the northern line of advance is the one and only one that has any chance of success. Namely, the one of which the major effort must be directed and at the expense of the southern front.

Brooke has doubts

"You are, therefore, proposing yourself for the one and only front that can play any major part in the Western offensive on Germany. Have you considered whether you are likely to be very acceptable in American eyes for this command? I have grave doubts in view of their present claims to being definitely the predominating partner in the Western offensive."

Next day Montgomery wired the C.I.G.S. to assure him that, though he had arranged a visit from Eisenhower on the twenty-eighth, he would do nothing further without his instructions and suggesting that he should fly back to England next day for consultation. Brooke's diary for Sunday, November 26, describes this visit.

". . . Monty flew from Belgium and landed at Hartford Bridge Flats at 11.30 a.m. We decided that there were three fundamentals to be put right:

"(*a*) to counter the pernicious American strategy of attacking all along the line;

"(*b*) to obviate splitting an army group with the Ardennes in the middle of it, by forming two groups (a northern and a southern) instead of three as at present;

"(*c*) to appoint a commander for the land forces.

"Monty is to see Eisenhower on Monday and, if he opens the subject, Monty is to begin putting forward the above proposals.

"November 28. At 12.30 I went to see the P.M., having asked for an interview with him. I told him I was very worried with the course operations were taking on the Western Front. I said that when we looked facts in the face this last offensive could only be classified as the first strategic reverse that we had suffered since landing in France. I said that in my mind two main factors were at fault, i.e.: (*a*) American strategy; (*b*) American organization.

"Winston said that he also was worried about the Western Front. He agreed with most of what I had said, but was doubtful as to the necessity for a land forces commander. I think I succeeded in pointing out that we must take the control out of Eisenhower's hands, and the best plan was to repeat what we did in Tunisia when we brought in Alex as a deputy to Eisenhower to command the land forces for on November 28. That night he reported to the C.I.G.S.:

"Ike visited me today. We talked for three hours in a most friendly way and I proved to him that we had definitely failed and must make a new plan and next time we must quite definitely not (repeat not) fail. He admitted a grave mistake has been made and in my opinion is prepared to go almost any length to succeed next time. Hence his own suggestion I should be in full operational command north of the Ardennes with Bradley under me and 6 Army Group in a holding rôle in south. . . ."

In a further telegram next morning Montgomery added:

"Had a further talk with Ike this morning before he left and there is no doubt our discussion last night has left him worried and ill at ease. He thought he and Bradley between them could do the business, and he now understands clearly that they made a very grave error and the net result is complete failure to do what was intended. When I suggested last night that Bradley would be suitable as land force commander under him he definitely shied right off it, and it is my impression this morning that he thinks Bradley has

Montgomery with Bradley, who led the American 1st Army in the Ardennes. Montgomery told Brooke: "His influence must be curbed"

him. "I told Winston that the only way of putting things right was to get Marshall to come over. He agreed; we decided to wait for a few more days before doing so."

The offensive which Eisenhower had ordered in October, which Patton had anticipated by his attacks south of the Ardennes and which Bradley, after waiting a fortnight for the weather to clear, had launched on a far too wide front was now petering out.

The weather was appalling, ammunition ran short, and, after a fortnight's struggle in drenched fields and quagmires in which an advance of only eight miles was achieved at the point of greatest penetration, the Siegfried Line remained unbreached. As Montgomery had warned Eisenhower when he refused to concentrate, the Western Allies were now in a "strategic strait-jacket." They were bogged down and reduced to the trench warfare it had always been their object to avoid.

All this Montgomery proceeded to rub in when Eisenhower visited him failed him as an architect of land operations.

"There is no doubt he is now very anxious to go back to the old set-up we had in Normandy and up to September 1 and to put Bradley under my operational command with both our army groups north of the Ardennes. In fact, he now definitely wants me to handle main business but wants Bradley to be in on it and, therefore, he will put him under me.

"In my opinion Ike will never agree to appointment of a land force commander for whole front as he wants to do this himself."

Brooke's diary continued:

"December 1. Went to see Winston at 10 a.m. to tell him about Monty's wires. Found him in bed finishing his breakfast, surrounded by birthday presents. 'This is delicious butter sent to me by my doctor. His wife makes it with her cow—she milks it and beats it up, etc.' He was in good mood and approved the steps that Monty had taken, including the latter's letter to Ike laying down in black and white the results of their talk together."

The conference with the Supreme Commander that Montgomery had proposed in his letter of November 30 took place at Maastricht on December 7.

Yet, despite their personal cordiality, Montgomery's meeting with Eisenhower and his other principal subordinates, Bradley and Tedder, proved a failure. Montgomery wrote to the C.I.G.S. in despair.

"Eisenhower has obviously been 'got at' by the American generals; he reversed his opinion on all major points on which he had agreed when he visited me on November 28. . . . I personally regard the whole thing as quite dreadful. I can see no good coming out of this business. Eisenhower and Bradley have their eyes firmly fixed on Frankfurt, and the route thence to Kassel. We shall split our resources and our strength, and we shall fail.

"I can do no more myself. . . . If we want the war to end within any reasonable period you have to get Eisenhower's hand taken off the land battle. I regret to say that, in my opinion, he just doesn't know what he is doing. And you will have to see that Bradley's influence is curbed."

The onus of action was now on the C.I.G.S. Though Montgomery, confident that he could handle the situation himself, had hitherto been averse to his doing so, Brooke had already taken preparatory steps. On December 4 the Prime Minister had written to the President asking, in view of the stalemate in France and Italy, for a meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Roosevelt's reply, prompted by Marshall, was not encouraging. It was to leave everything to Eisenhower.

Disagreed with Ike

An immediate invitation to meet the Prime Minister and British Chiefs of Staff in London was therefore sent to the Supreme Commander and his deputy. The meeting took place, as Brooke's diary records, in the Prime Minister's map room.

"December 12. I have just finished one of those days which should have been one of the keystones of the final days of the war. I feel I have entirely failed to do what is required, and yet God knows how I could have done anything else.

"At 6 p.m. met Ike and Tedder with P.M. in the latter's map room, with the whole Chiefs of Staff. Ike explained his plan, which contemplates a double advance into Germany, north of Rhine and by Frankfurt. I disagreed flatly with it, accused Ike of violating principles of concentration of force, which had resulted in his present failures.

"December 13. I was very depressed last night and seriously thought of resigning, as Winston did not seem to attach any importance to my views. I found, however, today that the situation was far better than I thought."

Yet though the Western Allies had temporarily lost the initiative which British strategy had won for them two years before, though their reserves had been committed and their hand—formerly so skilfully concealed—been disclosed, the stalemate was about to be broken by a greater optimist than Eisenhower.

Hitler, ever since September, had been husbanding a new army of young fanatics he had raised by a drastic autumn call-up. He had decided to stake everything on a single throw, "to win or lose it all." And because he despised the Americans and believed them to be more likely to break under such a blow than the Russians, he had resolved to leave the Eastern Front to look after itself and make his desperate bid for victory in the West.

Its object was to drive a wedge between the two main halves of the Anglo-American forces which Eisenhower had aligned on either side of the Ardennes and, by striking from there at the point of maximum potential confusion, where the Americans and British forces joined, to reach Brussels and Antwerp in the latter's rear, encircle

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Take a chair

Know what makes a chair comfortable, and you'll get the right one for your purpose

The Parker-Knoll Wingfield chair has wooden-tipped arms for hard wear. Height, 39 in. Price from £24 15s.

G-plan bedroom chair A6031. Foam rubber upholstery makes it light to move about. Price from £15 10s.

A FRIEND of mine once told me that she never considered the comfort of chairs until she slipped a disc. Before that, one chair was much the same as another. But now that good back support is vital to her, she knows at once whether a chair is well or badly designed.

Many of us do not know when we are sitting uncomfortably. We spend most of the day either slouched or perched in chairs at home or at work, and are unreasonably tired in the evening, often as a direct result of having sat with our spines in an unnatural position for a large part of the day. The shape of the chair you choose, whether it is an upright or an easy chair, depends first and foremost on what shape you are yourself. Though basically we all mean the same thing when we talk about "comfort," we achieve it in very different-looking chairs. Before you buy, try out all the chairs in the shop. Don't just sit—move about, see which positions are comfortable, and which are not.

To be comfortable, a chair must support your back in the right places. Whatever kind of chair it is, you need good support in the middle of your back, and an easy chair needs additional support at the back of the neck, to stop your head tipping over. The seat should be sloped gently so that you sit right in the angle of the chair, not halfway down the seat. It should not be too long, so that the edge of the seat catches the backs of your knees, nor too short so that it catches the back of your thigh. The seat height should be so that both feet can rest comfortably on the ground.

So much for the outline of the chair. What about width? Being able to move about is one of the essentials of comfort. No one, except perhaps an Eastern holy man, can be comfortable if he is forced to sit in one position only. Enough width is necessary to allow you to move about in the chair, changing your position often. The arms of an armchair are another important factor. These should be placed so that your elbows can rest on them with the arm bent roughly at a right-angle. If they are too low, you will tend to sit with your back slumped forward: arms too high will hunch your shoulders.

The first chair supports the back, but so high and so upright that you are forced to slouch forward. The seat is too low and too long, cutting the backs of the legs. The second chair slopes back at a slight angle. The seat height and depth are adapted to the body's lines

A familiar type of armchair. The long seat forces you to sit in a flattened position. Arms are too high, and there is no support for the head. The good version has a longer back, lower arms, and padding in the right places for support. The seat is short to let you sit in the angle of the chair and to allow free movement of the legs

Which one to choose?

We buy different chairs to sit in to do different things. You wouldn't furnish your sitting-room with dining chairs, any more than you would sit down to eat in a padded chair with a footstool. An upright chair, which you would use as a dining chair, or to write at a desk, should have its seat at about eighteen inches from the floor, and the seat should be about two inches shorter than your thighs to give you plenty of room to move your knees. The back of the chair should slope very slightly backwards, and give you support in the middle of your back. A dead-straight back, at right angles to the seat, found often in old upright chairs, makes your back arch forwards and you feel about to slip off the chair.

A padded seat is more comfortable than a wooden one. Upright chairs come in for a lot of hard wear, particularly in a house with children, and the new plastic materials make a practical alternative to fabric for covering. Sturdy construction of the framework is also important. Check that the grain runs along the length of the members, and rock about in the chair to see how it will stand up to rough treatment. Cross ties between the legs help to strengthen the frame.

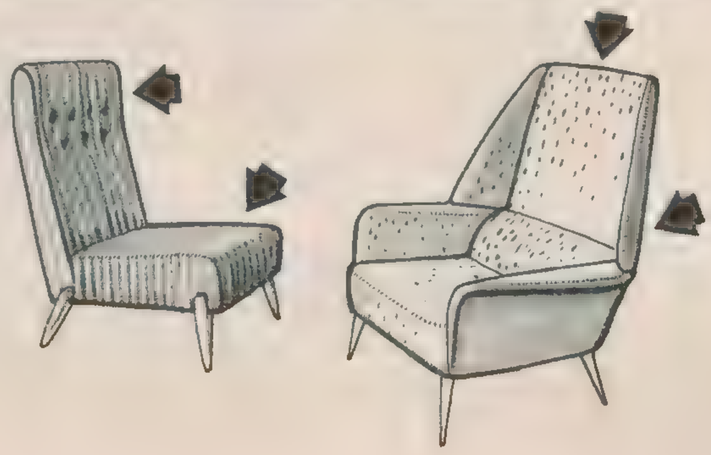
An important factor in your choice of a dining chair is the relationship between it and your table. There should be at least seven inches between the top of the seat and the underneath of the table, giving plenty of room for your legs, or you will find that you have to sit with them twisted sideways while you eat.

For a fireside chat

Upholstered easy chairs can be divided roughly into three categories. First, there are the chairs in which you all sit round the fire to talk, read or watch television. These should give you support all the way up your back, including a neck rest, so that your head does not loll. The back should not slope too far backwards, so that you can see the other people in the room without having to crane your head.

The average chair seat height is 16 in. from the ground, sloping slightly backwards to tip you gently into the angle of the chair. Older people generally prefer chairs whose

Four chairs designed to do a good job well. The dining chair has a back which is bent to give you good support. The moulded upholstered seat is comfortable to sit on. The lounging chair has good support for the small of the back, a removable headrest, and matching adjustable footstool. The sewing chair gives support for the back, a firm headrest, and comfortable, sloped seat, with a flexible front edge. The fireside armchair has draught-defeating side pieces, arms at the right height, an upholstered pad for the small of the back, and slightly sloped back, high enough to support the head



Take a chair

continued from previous page

seats are higher off the ground, so that getting in and out of them is less effort. The chair should have arms to rest your elbows on when you are reading. The seat, as in an upright chair, should be roughly two inches shorter than your thigh, so that your feet can rest comfortably on the ground.

The upholstered edge of the seat should be soft, to avoid a hard ridge behind the knees.

Some chairs have wings on either side of the head-rest. These are acomfort if your sitting-room is draughty. They also give older people more support. You should make sure that they are incorporated into the framework of the chair, not just wobbly additions. A loose head-cushion is sometimes sold with the chair. If you like this extra support, you could also use one of those bone-shaped neck pillows which come from China.

There is usually a tremendous choice of upholstery materials. For a much-used sitting-room choose something hardwearing and rough textured. Wooden arms, or arm-tips, eases wear.

Chairs in the second category of easy-chairs are the ones which you use for sewing or knitting. With these, the same standards of comfort and back support apply as for the first type, except that a sewing chair has no arms, so that you can move your elbows.

The last kind of chair is the out-and-out lounging chair—the one you sink into for an afternoon nap or an evening snooze. This should be the last word in comfort, tilted backwards to a semi-lying position, and preferably with a footstool to match, so that you can put your feet up level with the seat. A new one, which seems to me to be what most of us have been looking for, is the Rock 'n Rest, a well-shaped chair which is lever-operated, to rock gently or stop in any comfortable position you find.

You can make this chair in a weekend

I made this Homecraft chair in two days. It is padded with Dunlopillo and plastic foam. Thanks to skilful designing, none of the upholstery tacks is visible in the finished chair. Price from £10 7s. 6d. according to fabric used

Paper patterns are a guide for cutting out the cover pieces. I made a trial assembly of the frame

The next step is to tack the Pirelli webbing across the back frame. Over this goes a pad of plastic foam

The foam and plywood arm-rests are ready assembled. Here, I am covering them with the upholstery fabric

Putting the upholstery covering on the finished back. Each piece has an identification number on the pattern

Making up the comfortable seat. Over Pirelli webbing go a pad of felt and a thick cushion of Dunlopillo

All the pieces are covered and ready to put together. Here I am fixing the side pieces to the back with bolts

June in January

continued from page 7

the Americans possibly keep any degree of control over so monumental a feat as "merely" warming up cities in their respective homelands? Doesn't that make discussion of the next step—control of artificial climate as a military device—academic?

These are big, world-shadowing questions. Those who know most about them don't think they're academic—partly because they know how real and how near the answers may be.

Learning as much as possible about the approach to those answers was a leading objective of the eighteen-month International Geophysical Year. Earth satellites played a prominent part. Now that the year is over, humanity will pool its new information.

From what we know now, American meteorological experts have discovered one way to warm up their cities without harming their neighbours. It is an adaptation of "the greenhouse effect."

This is a term used by meteorologists to account for a two-degree rise in the mean temperature of the North Atlantic sub-Arctic regions and the eastern and central United States during the past one hundred years.

Tremendous consumption of coal and oil have put enough carbon dioxide into the atmosphere in that time to cover those regions with an invisible but effective "soot shield." Like a greenhouse, this keeps the sun's heat from radiating away at its usual speed.

Recent U.S. studies in the Arctic indicate that a variation of this phenomenon takes place in nature. When temperatures in the land of the ice caps fall below twenty-two degrees below zero, a fog of ice crystals develops.

This "fog" effectively lessens the formation of cold air at the surface by reducing radiation of solar energy. Trapped near the ground, that heat raises the air temperatures.

Warming the winds

Dr. Harry Wexler, research director of the United States Weather Bureau, said recently that his polar researchers are working on a way to produce this ice fog artificially over the entire Arctic during the winter months.

He estimated that it would raise the mean temperature of the Arctic as much as twenty degrees and warm the icy blasts that sweep down on the United States.

To form such an enormous fog, six to twelve miles deep over the top of the world, would call for vast quantities of water vapour. But the Arctic ice pack and the frigid oceans are practically inexhaustible sources of that. They merely need to be vaporized. How? Use atom bombs, says Wexler.

A less drastic method of warming the Arctic for farming was advanced several years ago by the late mathematical genius and atomic energy commissioner, Dr. John E. von Neumann. He proposed that aircraft be used to "dust" the ice fields with a fine coal dust, so preventing radiation.

By warming the Arctic air, both atom bombs and coal dust pose problems that must be coped with. Warmer Arctic air would speed disintegration of the polar ice cap by preventing normal winter replenishment of ice lost to summer melt and evaporation. This could have disastrous consequences.

Once the ice cap melts, global circulation of warmer air will in turn melt the world's glaciers. To project this risk to its worst conclusion, if all the glaciers melted, they would raise the world's oceans sixty-five to two hundred feet, inundating every coastal region for great distances inland.

If weather control is that menacing, why not drop the whole thing? It needn't be as bad as that.

If, eventually, we build atomic heating stations to modify Arctic weather, studies now under way show that the resulting warmer winds could be prevented from crossing the Great Lakes to pick up moisture that otherwise might precipitate three- and four-foot snowfalls in Chicago.

That kind of control is especially important if man-made weather caused Chicago's annual snowfall to exceed its annual loss through melting and evaporation.

The realization that an enemy could use such tactics as a weapon puts the note of urgency into the West's catching up with Soviet polar research. By using weather control as a tactical device, the Kremlin could literally bring on a new Ice Age for strategic areas of the Western Hemisphere and defeat us with nothing harsher than a bombardment of snowflakes (a teaspoonful of silver iodide crystals makes forty million snowflakes).

On the brighter side, once the threat of war is out of the way there is practically no limit to the wonders that man-made weather could work. An increase in the mean temperature in Britain during winter would make snow a rare stranger and bring about a kind of perpetual spring.

Zest for living

Flying may at first encounter some "fogs-that-got-away," but since all airborne traffic will be in jetliners that fly above the weather, the only difficulty will be an occasional instrument landing or take-off. In time, even fogs will stay where man wants them.

The clothing, shelter and heating industries will be well advised to do a little forecasting and diversification of their own. Lighter fabrics will be about the only kind marketable, even for night-time wear, with thinner electronically heated blankets for babies, the ill and the aged.

Outdoor living will boom to undreamed proportions, improving the health of all. In the beginning our constitutions may require adjustment to lesser extremes of heat and cold, but energy formerly needed can be used to give us greater endurance, vigour and zest for living.

Only on the aesthetic side may we pay a price, though a small one, for so many blessings. In winning control of the weather, man one day may be able to do no more than assure his sons and grandsons that, yes, there were such things as thunder in the sky and rainbows and flaming sunsets.

For all these manifestations of nature are born of the weather's violence, and, with climate control, they may become a thing of the past. THE END

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Today, the world is your oyster

by Elizabeth Nicholas

IN this year of Grace, Nineteen Hundred and Sixty, we shall be free to do something for the first time in twenty years—spend as much as we want on a holiday abroad.

Currency restrictions are OFF; the world, once more, is the Englishman's oyster. . . .

Before passing on to all the various holidays, many of them very inexpensive, which are now on offer, let me recall that for several years the holiday allowance has been £100, though fares could be paid in sterling.

I can almost hear the hollow laughter ringing round many a fireside as hard-pressed fathers, with youngsters to feed, clothe, educate and cherish, reflect on their new-won freedom to spend a thousand quid if they feel like it on the summer holidays.

Yes, I know; for the majority of us, £100 plus fares has represented a good deal more than could conceivably be spent each year. Nevertheless, I fancy we should be surprised if we knew just how many people are, in fact, likely to benefit from the lifting of the foreign currency restrictions, and they are by no means all in the Clore class.

During my travels—and I do travel a good deal—I am constantly meeting a surprising variety of people spending a surprising amount of money on their journeyings around Europe. During the last year or so, they have included a chap who owned a small café in Lancashire, a Shropshire farmer, a machine-tool

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MEMBERS

The sky's the limit now on holidays in the dollar zone. But to see America cheaply travel by express coach

continued from previous page

fitter from Glasgow, a teacher from Middlesex and a waiter from a smart London hotel.

That being so, I feel justified in making a few suggestions for those who in 1960 will be able to profit from this freedom to spend abroad as much as they can afford—those lucky people who can lay hands on several hundreds of pounds.

Many such will, I think, turn their eyes towards the Americas, for so long a forbidden territory. The Chancellor did, it is true, in 1957 remove the veto on dollars; since then the £100 allowance has been spendable in the States or in Canada. But many people felt that £100 did not go far in those countries and that it was hardly worth paying the heavy fare for so short a holiday.

Now, all is different. If you fly to New York, the minimum return fare is £144; by sea, around £110.

Bear in mind, if you are not pressed for time, to travel by sea means you are fed and lodged for a fortnight.

Once arrived, what then?

I would advise you to write to the Greyhound Coach Lines at 33 Regent Street, London, W.1, for timetables, maps and fare lists. This coach service covers the whole of the United States and its fares are by any standards, let alone those of America, extremely cheap. Once you have the timetables, you can spend many happy hours working out an itinerary.

Estimates as to what is the minimum sum on which one can live, day by day, in the States vary widely. I know of one woman who managed six weeks on £100 and travelled New York–New Orleans–San Francisco–New York.

For myself, I think that one could, by exercising strict economy and travelling Greyhound, cover the States from Atlantic to Pacific, taking a couple of months on the job, for around £350.

From Moscow to Mau-land

Another breath-taking holiday possibility would be to travel by the Trans-Siberian railway, all the way from Moscow to the heart of China. The land of Mau, contrary to a widely-held belief, is open to tourists, but all must be arranged through the Chinese version of the Russian Intourist. If you would like to know of an agent who has information on this, write to JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY.

Lastly, before turning to more realistic themes, I would mention two quite fantastic coach services: London–Bombay and London–Cape Town.

The first is a journey that I would dearly love to make: all through Europe, Turkey, Persia, the North-West Frontier, Pakistan. . . . It takes around eight weeks and the single fare is £90-odd, compared with £110 single for the Cape Town trip, but this does not include food or lodging, for which £1 a day should be budgeted. Tents are carried in the coach, though, for use (free) wherever suitable.

Given an ability to take the rough with the smooth (literally) and good health, what a memory such a journey would be! Only a few years ago, to travel overland to India was a tremendous feat; and now there is a coach service.

So, to more practical matters.

When it comes to the cost of a holiday in Europe, bear in mind the basic fact that, within reasonable limits, the same sort of hotel or pension makes the

continued on page 26

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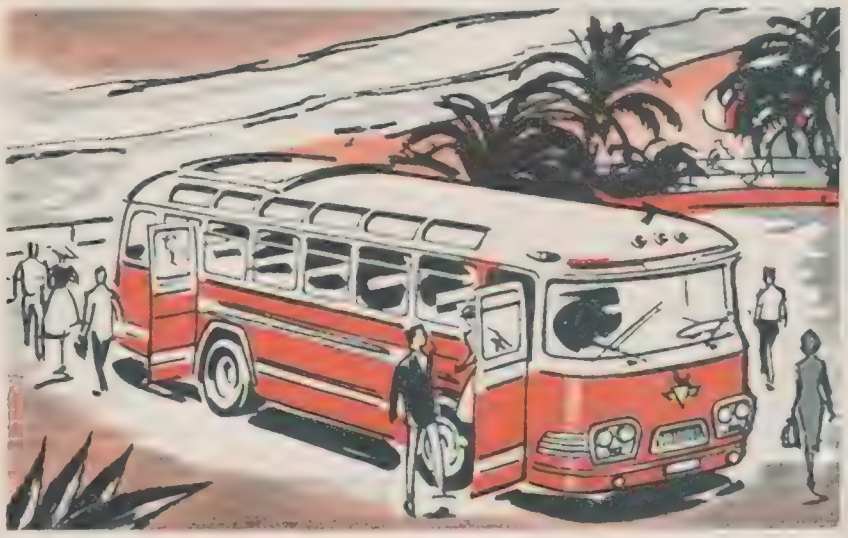

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Denmark for sea, sand—and sunshine. Camping grounds all over Europe now offer the cheapest holiday of all

continued from page 24

same sort of daily charge. A reasonable pension, whether in Italy, Switzerland or France, for example, charges anything from 25s. a day. It follows, therefore, that the farther you go, the more your holiday will cost and the greater will be the proportion swallowed up by fares.

If, then, you are a family man, the sandy Belgian coast offers, I think, the best bargain. It lies just across the Channel, the fare is low, and a number of agents make arrangements for accommodation in private houses at extremely reasonable cost, working out at about £12 a week, including fares. You will not live in luxury, but you will have clean, simple rooms and plenty to eat.

Holland (B.E.A. return Amsterdam, £16 12s.) costs a little more, but not much. Again, this is an ideal choice for the family, for Holland, with its gentle climate, smooth, safe sands and kindly people does not, for children, represent a complete upheaval of the normal pattern of life. Holland can, like Belgium, offer large, gay resorts or small, simple seaside villages.

Norway, land of friendship

Norway (B.E.A. charge £47 7s. for the return fare to Oslo) is one of the countries in Europe I like best, and for the reason that every Britisher feels at home there. The Norwegians are amongst our truest friends—and that, in the world today, is no small thing. I have always come home from Norway leaving behind a host of new-made friends.

So, if you are thinking of a first-ever trip abroad this year, you could not do better than choose Norway. Travel is admirably organized. A great many itineraries have been mapped out. You have only to choose which would suit you best and your troubles are over. Hotel reservations will be made and you will be given all the necessary tickets—coach, steamer and fjord ferry—together with an individual time-table.

It is as simple as that. And always, in Norway, should any snag arise, you can be very certain that in no time a Norwegian, speaking excellent English, will pop up and sort things out.

Warm welcome, good food

My own particular love in Norway is the Hardanger fjord and an hotel at Ulyik that the English have very sensibly made especially their own. I am devoted, too, to a smaller hotel at Utne, where the welcome is warm and the food delicious, though the great fjords farther north—Sogne fjord and Nord fjord, for example—are no less glorious.

For children, the island of Godoysund is perhaps the best bet of all. But no matter where you go in Norway, you can hardly put a foot wrong.

Denmark, too; I do not find it so cheap as Norway, but it is a marvellously invigorating country and Copenhagen (£43 4s. return, B.E.A.) is one of the gayest of European capitals. For young marrieds, it would be hard to beat. There's sea, sun and sand by day and a full-blooded night life for the evenings.

For children of all ages the island of Bornholm, lying far out in the Baltic close to the Swedish coast but belonging to Denmark, is ideal. Hotels are *very* inexpensive, from about 15s. a day, and the rocky coast, with its sandy

continued on page 28

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continued from page 26

coves, is romantically beautiful. The climate's quite exceptionally mild; vines, figs and mulberries ripen in the open air.

If you have a bit of money to spare, I would suggest you have a look at the Midnight Sun. In June you can fly from Stockholm or Oslo to the North Cape, far beyond the Arctic Circle, and see this wonderful sight.

Lapland—you can reach it via Helsinki, which is £71 19s. return by B.E.A.—is a fascinating place; an idea for those who have the pioneering spirit.

But if it is warmer weather you are after, your thoughts will turn to Spain, to southern France and to Italy—long days of idling, blissfully, between sand and sea; terraces thick with flowers, the scent of thyme, lavender, pine and laurel, and fishing villages whose houses, red and blue, green and yellow, reflect the rays of an intolerant sun.

The Costa Brava of Spain is today a wine that needs no bush. Hundreds of thousands of people flock there each year. If you have a mind to be a bit more original, you might explore the comparatively unknown coast between Tarragona and Valencia, or Alicante and Malaga. Here you will find "Spanish" Spain; no afternoon tea and no Yorkshire pudding, but the genuine, authentic tang of Iberia at its most splendid.

Farther south still new hotels spring up every year at Torremolinos and the villages nearby. They are quickly, easily and not too expensively reached by means of a night tourist flight to Gibraltar; £38 15s. return by B.E.A. A connecting coach will then deliver you, as it were, to your temporary front door.

Portugal—cheap, gay, homely

Portugal is another country where prices are lowish, again offsetting the cost of getting there. It is a country where many English people feel very much at home. Also it is, to my mind, remarkably beautiful.

I suggest Estoril if you like the gay life, and smaller resorts such as Praia da Rocha if you want to get away from it all, or one of the little villages that lie along the southern estuary of the Tagus where, for around 25s. a day, you will be well lodged and fed.

You can travel to Portugal by ship. A sea voyage at the beginning and the end of a holiday adds a special charm to the whole thing; for a seafaring race, there is a curious and very pleasurable excitement to be got from travelling in a mighty ship.

Many of us may never get to South America, the Cape or Australia, but we can get the feel of the big ship by travelling to Lisbon in one (only £12 tourist, single), or to Gibraltar (£15 tourist, single) for that matter, or to Bremen, in Germany (single fare, by cargo ship, £16 4s.), for the start of a German holiday.

The Rhine steamer is another form of travel that appeals to many English people. To float peacefully all the way to Switzerland, with many calls at riverside towns, is a combination of the restful and the energetic; long hours of lying on deck, watching the shores roll by, interspersed with short, sharp trips ashore, provides the best of both worlds.

Should you make such a voyage in late September or early October, you will have opportunity to see the Rhenish wine festivals, a never-to-be-forgotten experience.

For the economically-minded, Germany is a good bet. Agents offer amazingly inexpensive

continued on page 30

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holidays in villages in the Rhineland, the Black Forest, the Harz mountains and on the shores of Lake Constance. For the energetic there are, too, walking holidays through these regions, or canoeing holidays on the Moselle.

Austria can also offer bargains. At a cost of about £30 you should be able to buy yourself ten days in a little Alpine village.

The fresh simplicity of the Austrian Tyrol is perhaps its greatest charm. The close-cropped fields are studded with flowers, the sky is blue, the villages are always gay with colour and the food is delicious. Those who work in big cities and long to get the dust out of their nostrils will find Austria perfect.

But I was talking of the sun. . . .

The phrase "the south of France" has come to mean the stretch of coast lying between Marseilles and the Italian frontier, but there is more to it than that. East of Marseilles is the strange country of the Camargue, flat and sparsely inhabited, where bull-fighting is a popular sport and the riding is superb.

The lure of the Camargue

I would admit that the Camargue is a specialized taste, but not the coast still farther east, where many Frenchmen take their families. I cannot think why it is so neglected by the English. Prices are much lower than they are on the more fashionable Riviera, and at Marseillan plage, near Montpellier, you could hire a simple wooden chalet for as little as £6 a fortnight.

A word here for those who go abroad with a car, motor-cycle or scooter. "Campings" for such are now springing up all over Europe and they offer, perhaps, the cheapest holiday of all. Most of them are excellently equipped with permanent installations for showers, w.c.s and laundry. There are shops for purchasing food-stuffs, restaurants, and even points for irons and electric razors.

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Another bit of the French coast seldom visited by the English is the Atlantic coast, north of Bordeaux. It lacks the lush, spectacular beauty of the Côte d'Azur, but it is in every other way perfect for family holidays. The French Government Tourist Office at 178 Piccadilly, London, W.1, would be glad to send descriptive, well-illustrated leaflets.

If you like the sun, but do not really thrive in temperatures around the eighty mark, I

continued on page 32

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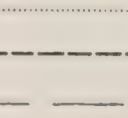

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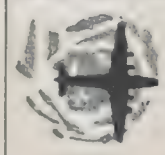

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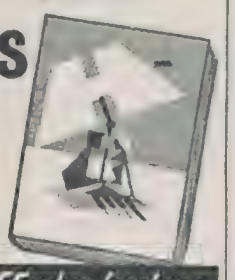

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continued from page 30

would recommend the region around Lake Annecy. Annecy itself is a marvellous touring centre; from it you can make day trips into Switzerland, Italy, the Mont Blanc area, thus seeing a great deal of glorious country but returning each night to the same hotel, the same bed.

There are a dozen or more little lakeside villages, many with small sandy beaches, and there are sailing boats for hire, canoes and pedallos. Steamers provide a pleasant means of transport.

For those who like messing about in boats, Lake Annecy is hard to beat. This challenge, though, might be taken up by many Swiss resorts. They provide much the same sort of thing and if I pick out one for special mention let it be Montreux.

This beautiful old town, set aside the blue waters of Lake Geneva, has an atmosphere that is, in my opinion, unique. It is a splendid centre for excursions.

I love, too, the valleys that run south from the Rhône and villages such as Saas Fee, St. Luc, Verbier and Champey. If you are interested in Alpine flowers these are your places. All around are towering mountains, tumbling torrents and clean, crisp air.

Italy for beauty and romance

Or you might try Ticino, the Canton of Switzerland, that runs down to the Italian frontier to the waters of Lake Maggiore; or cross into Italy itself and spend an idyllic holiday in that most romantic country.

Italy, like France, is too vast a canvas to be reproduced within my narrow space. Where to begin; where to end?

Here are a few suggestions:

Lake Orta, just as lovely as the more famous lakes of Como, Garda and Maggiore, but very much less well known; the high villages of the Dolomites for those who love walking; the Gulf of Spezia for sun and sea enthusiasts; the islands of Elba and Giglio for those who like to get away from it all; the deep south, Calabria, for connoisseurs of the unusual, the unknown; Sicily, for those who take their holiday in autumn or early spring.

Next, Yugoslavia, with its fantastic Dalmatian coast. Take a ship from Venice and sail down the Adriatic, calling at many ports, until you come to Dubrovnik, one of the loveliest places in the world.

Alternatively, get off the boat in Korcula, an island that is still miraculously untouched by modern times.

Should you choose Korcula *continued on page 34*

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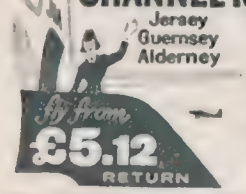

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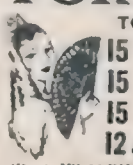

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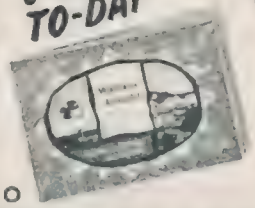

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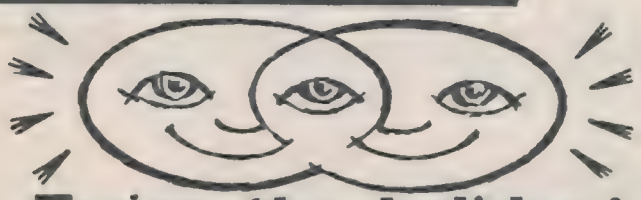

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continued from page 32

for your 1960 holiday you would not, I swear, regret it, for here there is everything but honky-tonk: a glorious old town, azure seas, massed flowers, olives and taverns where of an evening you may sit and eat out of doors, beneath hanging bunches of grapes, while your meat is grilled, deliciously, over a charcoal fire.

Now let's turn to Britain. What a boon the summer of 1959 must have been to our own resorts! The British climate is their worst enemy, and the long, fat summer of the year just dead must have given them a tremendous fillip.

No country in the world is more beautiful than ours when our gentle sun is shining, the fields spread green and the sea lies calm beneath a blue-washed English sky. Last year I discovered, for the first time, Northumberland; in spring, when the air was cool and crisp, the moors and hillsides brushed by a questing breeze and the sands stretched, mile after mile, untouched and golden by the margins of a steel grey sea.

This year go north—or south

I wish more southerners would travel northward for a summer holiday and that more northerners would travel south. There is a wonderful spaciousness in the north that the south has largely lost.

There is, too, in the little inns an atmosphere of homely welcome that is very endearing; and North Country housewives still bake their own bread and scones and griddle cakes, make their own jam and cakes, and even sometimes churn their own butter.

Yes, I fell in love with Northumberland. I discovered also the broad lands that stretch around Culmstock Beacon in the heart of Devonshire, only a few miles from the coast and yet a world apart from it.

Parents who have recollections of a childhood spent in rural England thirty, forty years ago, before our roads were crammed with motor cars, when village life moved on, serene and unchanging season after season, might well, I think, take their own children to the interior of Devonshire or Cornwall.

The coasts of these two counties are justly famous, but inland time has moved more slowly.

Beautiful, deserted Wales

The same is true of many parts of Wales. Why are her marvellous southern shores so sadly neglected? The north is, I know, beautiful, and has in part paid the penalty. Crowds flock to it year after year. In the south it is different; this is "Welsh" Wales, with sands as fine, with villages as lovely, as any in Britain.

The Isle of Man, too, is similar in that Douglas is the magnet that attracts the multitudes and some of the loveliest areas of the island are, in comparison, left empty.

And yet some people like to be one of a crowd. How else to account for all our southern seaside resorts that seem each year, as though made of elastic, to expand still farther.

I shall not easily forget Ramsgate as it was one July evening beneath a rich moon. It was as hot as the south of France. All along the front people were outside pubs and cafés, bare-armed, singing, dancing. Pleasure boats moved swiftly over the golden sea, the lights glittered and the whole air pulsated with life.

If only all our summers could be as that of 1959! It was the same everywhere, from

continued on page 36

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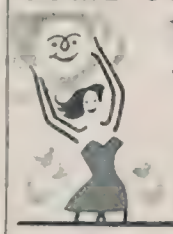

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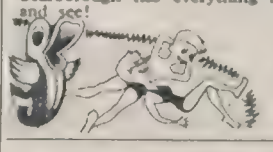

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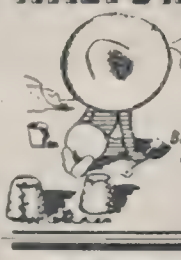

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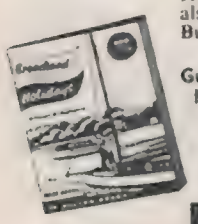

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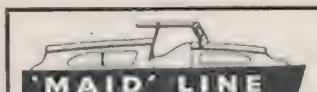

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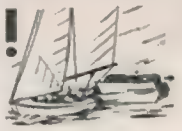

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continued from page 34

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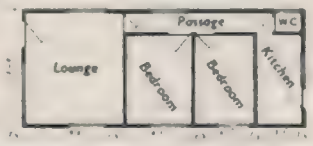

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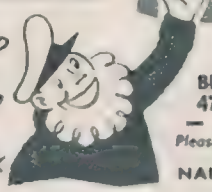

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TRAVEL BY TRAIN

The hard way to fireside fame

continued from page 11

acting in repertory in a converted swimming bath when someone told him he had a B.B.C. voice. "It may have been the swimming bath acoustics," he says. He endured seven B.B.C. auditions, heard nothing, became a schoolteacher, then was offered a job as a radio announcer.

Tom Glazer, of Associated-Rediffusion, was idling in a barrack room in Germany when he heard, from the British Forces Network station, a singer who owed Glazer's parents £50. He went to the station, in Hamburg, to ask for the cash, and found that the singer had left weeks before after recording the programme. But Glazer walked into an audition for an announcer and was given the job which led to his present post in television.

Muriel Young, Associated-Rediffusion's only woman announcer, went for a job as an actress. She arrived a week early, saw an audition for announcers in progress and joined in. She was one of six chosen out of three thousand. "I took it as a sign from the Almighty," she says.

Many announcers work in conditions that would cause trouble in a factory.

An airtight room

Those employed by Associated-Rediffusion, the company responsible for London weekday commercial programmes, make most of their announcements on sound only. They do this from a windowless room shaped like a triangle with the points cut off. The longest wall is about six feet in length, and there are double doors, soundproof—and airproof. The room contains a TV set, a desk, two seats, a microphone and a clock with a large second hand.

Announcers are on duty for six-hour stretches in this box. It contains an air-conditioning outlet which for acoustic reasons is always switched off. There is a small fan which the announcer must switch off whenever his microphone is live.

Tom Glazer says: "It's pleasant in winter to have a warm little hole to creep into; but in summer it is gruelling."

One stifling day Glazer sat in the box stripped to the waist, with beads of sweat rolling down his torso. The door burst open and a V.I.P. woman visitor was ushered in. Glazer's legs were behind the desk, and for all the visitor knew he might have been stark naked.

"And this is our announcer," said the official conducting the visitor's tour.

"Ah, yes," the woman said brightly. And she turned and walked out before Glazer could say a word.

Announcing is no longer an easy way to fame. "Before commercial television set up in opposition," Norton says, "the B.B.C. allowed announcers to chat away, putting over their personalities. McDonald Hobley, Sylvia Peters, Mary Malcolm, Peter Haigh and Donald Gray became national figures. Now we are here just to plug very small gaps."

Announcers suffer from the whims of their employers. The B.B.C., for instance, has behaved in an ungentlemanly way with its ladies. In 1952 it took its fresh, girlish types and put them through the Mayfair salons until they emerged glamorized, wearing dresses of rich, gleaming materials with low necklines. Three years later the corporation dropped one announcer, Avis Scott, for having "too much personality."

By 1957 the B.B.C. had decided that women announcers would in future appear only in the afternoons, and that evening programmes would be introduced by disembodied voices of men. Men were "more commanding, more authoritative," the B.B.C. said, thus introducing two adjectives which had never previously appeared in lists of announcers qualifications.

The B.B.C. and some of the commercial companies show signs of putting announcers once more on the screens. In the past this policy has led to fantastic reactions from the lunatic fringe of viewers.

Women often write to Richard Baker proposing marriage. Some ask him to give a sign that he has received their letters. "Rub your nose," they write, or "crook your little finger."

Baker returned from holiday in 1958 with a moustache. He read the news at 6 p.m. on Saturday, July 5. Viewers immediately overloaded the B.B.C. switchboard with demands that he should shave it off. Baker hastily succumbed; he read the news at 7.25 clean-shaven.

No matter how the public view them, announcers have no great status inside the television organizations.

Their pay ranges from £1,200 to £1,500 a year. Peter Haigh remained a guest announcer for four years. This meant that he was called in when needed, and he never knew what his income would be from one week to the next. In fact his pay averaged £10 a week at first and rose to £23 a week.

DECISION—1

Swift decisions are not sure.

Sophocles

Most announcers look on their jobs as stepping-stones to better jobs in television. "But waiting for the chance can be demoralizing," Tom Glazer said recently. "Once you are with a company they refuse to think of you except as a station announcer. I found out about an audition for a quiz programme compère the other day—after it was all over."

The hours worked by announcers make social life difficult. They are shift workers, going on duty either through the afternoon or from 6 p.m. until midnight.

In commercial programmes, which are tied rigidly to a tight time schedule, the greatest sin an announcer can commit is to overstay the time allowed him. His time for each announcement is worked out to the second, but he must be ready to reword his script at sight.

The fatal second

"If you have ten seconds," Glazer says, "it is no use beginning a complicated sentence that you won't be able to finish. If you are half a second over, you are in hot water. One second over and you have virtually lost the job."

Oddly, mistakes in announcing are tolerated more easily than overstepping the time limit, though these mistakes are a nightmare to the announcers.

Glazer once said "staple cheesing" for "steeple chasing." Years ago Mary Malcolm, when announcing regularly for the B.B.C., said "frog and fost" and "drain and rizzle" in a weather report.

Once McDonald Hobley began an announcement in the grand manner: ". . . an artist who needs no introduction, your favourite, my favourite, the famous . . . er. . . ." He had completely forgotten the name. The person being introduced had to chip in and say: "It's me, Silvie St. Clair."

On one occasion, when a breakdown occurred, Muriel Young's telephone rang and the cheerful voice of a programme officer said: "Tell viewers not to worry if the screen goes blank. It's only the boys in the back room changing a plug." Without thinking she repeated those exact words, instead of the usual formula, "technical reasons beyond our control." She was relieved when everyone seemed more amused than annoyed. THE END

Craze that's come to stay

continued from page 15

anything between 101 and 1,000,001. A game of the latter score was played throughout the summer of 1957 in Nottingham by two commercial travellers, Charles Duffy and Mark Jones.

Darts was established in the inns of England when Charles I ascended the throne in 1625. The Pilgrim Fathers, sailing to America on the Mayflower, are said to have amused themselves playing the game. But it was in the mid-twenties that darts became Britain's most popular active indoor game.

"It was a current craze like hula-hoops or yo-yo. But being such a fine game, it never lost its appeal," says Norman Reeves, the managing director of a British firm which makes 50,000 dart-boards a year.

As a game of pure skill, darts is nearer to a sport than a pastime, and considering the limited equipment, darts players achieve an accuracy rivalling the legendary feats of William Tell or Robin Hood. From the normal throwing distance of nine feet, Jim Pike, a former champion, can knock a cigarette out of a friend's lips and pin it to the board, flip a sixpence off a tumbler, and score accurately when the board is covered with newspaper.

Another expert, Joe Hitchcock, can split hairs, while Alwyn Mullins, a Yorkshireman, has been known to throw 120 two-inch-long darts into the board's twenty "bed."

Darts is spreading all over the world. In 1956, an American banker, who was visiting friends in a Sussex village, grew enthusiastic about the game after playing it in a local pub. He took twenty boards back to America with him and distributed them to friends. "We get correspondence from Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Texas and Scandinavia, and recently helped to form the Ontario Darts Association," says Frank Bailey, secretary of the National Darts Association, which has two and a half million registered players.

Most players enjoy darts for the gentle exercise, good companionship and relaxation. But the atmosphere is very different at a national championship. Up to ten thousand spectators, many of whom have travelled hundreds of miles in motor coaches, cheer on local heroes, the survivors of half a million entrants, who climb on to the lonely stage to throw scores which are illuminated on a huge electric scoreboard.

"Champions have to be cool in temperament and completely detached from their surroundings, like yogis," says a darts expert. "Throwing a dart is a gift, like juggling, calling for co-ordination of eye, brain and judgment."

Amazing accuracy

Ordinary players watching champions for the first time are amazed by their phenomenal accuracy and speed of throwing. Alwyn Mullins, a bulldozer driver who was the British champion in 1957 and who used to practise for nine or ten hours a day, goes round the board in "doubles" from one to ten, finishing with a "bull," in eighty-two seconds.

In April this year, at Tickhill, near Doncaster, Mullins and Frank Whitehead, a Yorkshire miner, played a match of 10,001. Each used 174 darts. After Whitehead had missed the top-scoring treble-twenty only eighteen times and Mullins only nineteen times, each player wanted fifty-two to finish the match. Mullins won by throwing twenty, twenty and a double six.

Mullins's ambition is to score, in competition, 501 with nine darts, scoring six treble twenties, treble seventeen, treble eighteen and double eighteen.

In a game where skill rather than strength is required, women start on equal terms with men, and there are hundreds of women's clubs throughout Britain. Incapacitated darts players, also, reach an astonishing proficiency. One armless Welsh player blows darts out of his mouth. Dickie Brett, a blind player from St. Dunstan's, uses a special throwing sling clipped to his arm, while another blind player, Charlie Fairbrass, of High Wycombe, corrects his aim on the clock-face system.

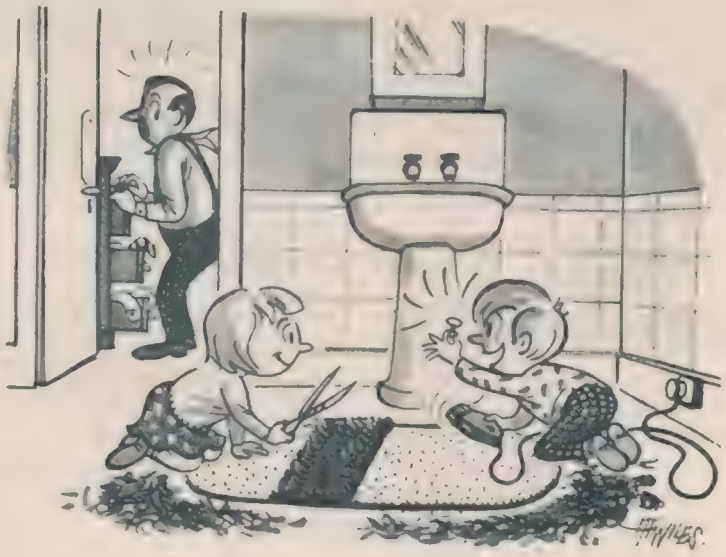
Darts players are all amateurs. Gambling is against the rules of the National Darts Association. Some years ago, it was alleged that publicans in Kent were tempting star players into their teams by offers of free beer. The practice was soon stamped out.

Darts can come in useful in other ways. Tom Wilkinson, the headmaster of a Leicestershire grammar school, introduced the game to his pupils, believing it sharpened up their wits and improved mental arithmetic.

But its most dramatic recorded use was at Salisbury, Rhodesia, in 1952.

A puff adder had squirmed its way into a saloon bar where a game of darts was in progress. As the snake reared to strike a spectator's leg, Colin Browne, the local champion, killed it with a neat throw through the head. THE END

Helping Hands



"We've found your collar stud, Daddy"

Too many ghosts

continued from page 10

attractive? Why don't I tell him to go and perform his nasty tricks with someone else?

Aloud she said: "All right, if you really think it is important."

He gave her shoulders a light pressure with both hands and said: "Good girl! Try to sleep. Don't worry, and don't be frightened." He walked off.

• • •

"Do you know that Mark is head over heels in love with Susan Marshall?" said Lady Paradine. She was speaking to her husband across the no-man's-land of adjoining bath and dressing-rooms.

"Eh, what—he is? Is he really? Well, I suppose, if it were true, one couldn't blame him."

"Of course it's true," said Lady Paradine.

Her red hair gleamed beneath her rhythmic brush strokes. She wore an attractive nightdress and her figure was still good, but as far as Lord Paradine was concerned she might have been wearing a boiler suit and a bowler hat. He had simply got out of the habit of noticing her. At some time past in their married life he had moved spiritually and physically from the boudoir to the tackle and gun rooms.

"Would you care to see the next Lady Paradine an American?"

Lord Paradine paused, one leg in his pyjama trousers and balancing to insert the other. "Eh, what's that, Enid? What has being an American got to do with it? Susan's a damn fine girl."

Lady Paradine went after a grey hair and had it out by the roots. "She hasn't a penny," she said evenly. "With things the way they are, it is almost Mark's duty to the family to marry for money and do a better job of it than you did, my dear."

Paradine paused half-way into his pyjama jacket and looked at his wife sharply. "What's that?" he said. "I married you for love, and you know it."

His wife had turned back to the mirror and was studying her reflection —the sagging skin at the throat and the lines at the eyes. "Did you?" she murmured. "I wonder whatever became of it?"

Paradine panicked. "What, what? What do you mean, *what became of it?* It's here—I mean there. What I mean to say is, I've always loved you. I do now, don't I?"

Lady Paradine gave up and turned a serene smile upon her husband. "Of course you do, darling," she said. "Don't let it worry you."

OVER Lord Paradine's face came a look of exquisite relief at being let off what was threatening to become an unpleasant hook. He said: "Well, about the boy. Has he said anything yet?"

"Of course not. And then there's still the question, which one will she take?"

"Eh?" Paradine paused in the middle of squeezing toothpaste on to a brush and tried to cope with the new idea. "What do you mean, *which one will she take?*"

"Mark or Dick—they're both in love with her."

"What? You mean Lockerie?" Paradine was shocked. "Why, Richard's old enough to be her father!"

"Provided he had married at sixteen," said Lady Paradine. "Just because the war put some grey into his hair and he was in your division doesn't make him as old as you, you know."

"But it's ridiculous, Enid," Paradine said. "He's a widower. He's got a son —what's Julian now, getting on for nine, isn't he? No young girl. . . ."

"Don't be silly, John—it's fashionable these days for young girls to marry older men. Some of them even like children—there's Beth, for instance."

"Beth? What's she got to do with it?"

"Hadn't you noticed? When Julian's here, she spends nearly all of her time with him. They seem to adore one another. By the way, he'll be coming here tomorrow."

Lord Paradine said: "Good for a kid who hasn't got a mother," and inserted his toothbrush into his mouth.

After a moment's quiet brushing of her hair, Lady Paradine said: "John, was Isobel ever in love with Richard Lockerie?"

Paradine took the brush from his mouth. "How would I know? You're always asking that, and what's that got to do with anything?"

"You ought to know, as the head of the family."

"Well, I wasn't then," Paradine said with some slight irritation. "Besides, I was away a good deal of the time. I suppose they liked one another as children, but there couldn't have been anything between them, because the upshot was that old Dick married that French girl."

Lady Paradine brushed six more strokes and then asked: "Why did Isobel never marry?"

Lord Paradine sighed and tried to hurry his ablutions; this was turning into a regular inquisition and he hated being questioned. "Looking after Father and the Hall, I suppose. Damned shame too—she's a fine woman, Isobel. Ought to be married."

Lady Paradine continued brushing. This time she did not speak, and Lord Paradine found the hiatus even more uncomfortable than if she had continued the interrogation, for it forced him to think and wonder.

"I suppose it mightn't be bad for Dick," he said. "A fine young girl like Susan. Keep him up to scratch. Damn good match, eh?"

Lady Paradine did not reply specifically to this, but said obliquely: "Whether or not she is really in love with Mark, to become Lady Paradine must be a great temptation—particularly to an American."

Lord Paradine stared at his wife in bewilderment. "But you said. . . ."

Lady Paradine said pityingly: "Oh, John, really! With a choice of titles, naturally one takes the better one." She began to dab beauty cream on both cheeks with firm, positive strokes. In time to them she said: "I wouldn't like—my Mark—to be married—to Susan Marshall."

Lord Paradine put down toothbrush and mug, in genuine surprise at the curiously flat, hard and almost menacing tone that had come into his wife's voice. He stared at her, but she did not say anything more, nor was there any change in her expression as, contemplating her face in the mirror, she went on working the beauty cream firmly into her cheeks.

Paradine turned his attention once more to his teeth. It was just after ten o'clock. . . .

Meanwhile Susan had followed Hero's counsel and lain down on her bed fully clothed, even to her shoes. She had tried to organize her room as it had been the night she was disturbed.

A turmoil of thought whirled through her mind: who or what hated her? What or who wished her away from Paradine Hall, and why? Who and what was Alexander Hero that she should be disturbed by him? Did she like him? Was Beth really her friend? Was Isobel? Was Lady Paradine? Did she love Mark? Could she love him enough to give up all her ways, her customs and her life, to be something and someone she had never been before? Did she want to be Lady Paradine?

And what about Sir Richard—Beth's "Uncle Dick"—widower with a boy of nine, the one supposed to be coming home from school? Dick was still young and vigorous in body and mind; he had paid her marked attention. She had enjoyed his companionship, the games, the riding, the sailing. And yet there was something about him and his attentions too that disturbed her, something she felt was not wholly sincere. She was fond of him, but did not think of him with that sudden warmth that came sometimes when she thought of Mark.

And now there was Alexander Hero, who of all of them seemed to attract her most disturbingly. What of him, she kept asking herself—that too-poised, too-intelligent, too-fascinating young man?

AND that was the last thought she had, for she must have dozed. And then she was wide awake once more. There was the cold wind again, and something or someone was in the room. The thought flashed through her mind, *What if it were not Hero? Supposing. . . .*"

Then the icy fingers were at her throat—a hand, horrid, cold and clammy, as though from the tomb.

It was unbearable, even though she had been expecting it, and, brave as she was, she felt her nerves go. The touch of the icy fingers paralysed her, and no more than a moan, a kind of whimper, came from her lips.

And then the hand was gone, and someone was whispering: "Sorry, old girl. It's all right. It's all over," and a warm, comforting palm was laid upon her brow. In her relief in reaction from the panic that had gripped her, she reached for him in the darkness like a child, her two arms found him, and hungrily held him, for she needed his comfort now, and he gave it, taking her into his arms and holding her.

Then their mouths met.

It was Hero who recovered first and said, still whispering: "I think perhaps we'd better have the light now," and Susan answered: "Yes, we'd better." She felt and heard him move, and the click of the light switch of the bed lamp.

But no light came on. Hero felt his scalp tingling and his nerves taut. He had reproduced the conditions of the experiment exactly, with but one exception—he had not tampered with the lights. He said softly, close to Susan's ear, "Second thoughts—we'll have it as before. Light your candle as you did that night, but move very quietly."

Susan groped her way towards the mantel and lit the candle.

They faced one another, with the knowledge that they had just shared a moment of love, or if not that, then something closely akin to love, but they were not embarrassed by it; they were able to look at one another with steadiness and appraisal, and to think their thoughts. Susan's were: *I don't know. I don't know. I thought I wanted and needed him. I suppose perhaps I did then, but I don't now.*

Hero's were: *You're a fool, Hero.*

He slipped shut the bolt fastened to the inside of her door, while Susan watched him wide-eyed. She then said: "That was it. That was exactly what it was like. Are you satisfied?"

"Yes," Hero said. He was pale, and his eyes glittered in the candlelight.

"What was it, then?" Susan asked.

But the only reply he made was to

Everybody's Puzzling

QUIZZLE

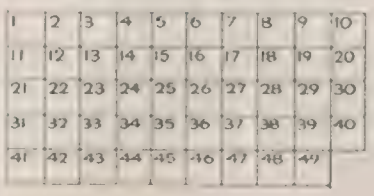
The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

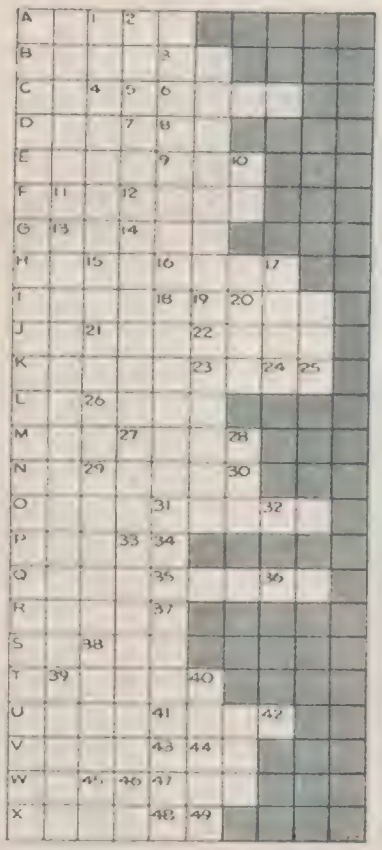
CLUE DOWN

A. To do so without good cause will cost you £5 (4, 3, 13, 4).

CLUES ACROSS

A. Turkish title for Governor or officer.
B. Mischievous child.
C. Decorative salve.
D. Death dealing.
E. Lively dance in duple tempo.
F. Guinea pig-like rodent.
G. Native of Greenland.
H. Monument to someone buried elsewhere.
I. Something foul or indecent.
J. Funnel to assist talking over a distance.
K. Island forming a borough of New York city.
L. Sea nymph.
M. Continuous.
N. Disinclination to move.
O. Common tare of stitchwort species.
P. 1914 soldier of Australian Expeditionary Force.
Q. Decayed wood for cinder.
R. Unwrought precious metal cast in a mould.
S. Yellow pigment.
T. Neither masculine nor feminine.
U. Knitted jacket named after Crimean General.
V. How Boers unharness on arrival.
W. Khruschev, for example.
X. Marine mammal said to be a mermaid.





BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

I usually walk down several of the escalator steps at my local Underground station.

I find that if I walk down 16 of the steps it takes me 35 seconds to reach the bottom. When I'm in a hurry I walk down 24 steps, and find that I reach the bottom in 25 seconds.

How many steps has the escalator—and how long does it take me to do the trip when I don't walk down at all?

NOW TURN TO PAGE 40 FOR THE ANSWERS

DECISION—2

The smaller the mind the sooner made up.

Archbishop Whateley

continued from previous page

raise his finger to his lips and she saw that he was no longer looking at her, but was eyeing the knob of the door handle, which was slowly, perceptibly and inexorably turning.

Someone or something from the outside was trying it.

They watched and waited in frozen silence. The door-knob made one more half-turn. They heard a faint creak in the corridor, and then all was silent again. Outside the night was alive with country sounds, but within the house it was quiet.

Hero did not appear to be listening any longer, but rather concentrating on something else, almost as though he were waiting for something, or counting time. The bulb of the bedside lamp suddenly began to glow bright yellow in its shade, and Susan gave vent to a startled "Oh!" for it appeared to have come on by itself. But Hero let go his breath in what appeared to be a long sigh of relief and recognition. "Alarm over," he said.

"Are you sure?" said Susan unsteadily. And then: "Oh, Alexander—I'm very glad you were here with me. What was it?"

Hero was eyeing her now thoughtfully. "Not what," he said, "but who? 'What' would have come in without knocking. 'Who' finds an inside bolt a little more than can be managed."

"Alex," Susan asked, "why didn't you go after it—or whoever? Why didn't you open the door? You would have caught them, wouldn't you?"

Hero was regarding her quizzically. "Who would have caught whom?" he said.

Susan suddenly drew in her breath sharply. "It's because of me, then, that you didn't?"

"I didn't quite have the right to, did I?" Hero said.

Susan went to him and impulsively laid her hand upon his arm and whispered: "Oh, you are nice!"

Her closeness disturbed Hero, but no longer in the same way. He said: "No. Not really. Not very. Practical."

Suddenly it dawned upon Susan that he might not have wished to encounter who it was that had tried her door, that he did not trust her. It made her furiously angry. He had supposed it might have been Sir Richard. . . . Then her anger passed, leaving only a feeling of deepest melancholy.

Hero said: "I'll have a look, but I don't expect I'll find anything. You need not worry—there will be no more doing tonight—but after I've gone, just slip that bolt back on the door and don't open it until morning. Sorry about everything, Susan."

Then, with a swiftness that was almost like a conjurer's trick, he was gone.

He did not proceed down the corridor at once to search, a gesture he knew would be fruitless, but remained standing outside Susan's door. He heard the rod of the bolt slide into place.

Then his nostrils were assailed by a strange odour. He lifted his head and sniffed. It was faint but present and, because of his laboratory training, recognizable. It made the hair bristle at the nape of his neck and a sensation of nausea rise in his throat.

Like a hound following the scent he sniffed his way down the door to the bottom of it by the floor, where it emanated from. There was a still slightly damp splotch there.

He sniffed closer, touched it with the tip of his finger, and then looked at the white patch of burn on the skin where he had come in contact with the acid. He rose to his feet pale and sweating, though inside he felt sickeningly cold.

© *Paul Gallico, 1959*

NEXT WEEK: Hero meets a prowler with a pistol

MAN ABOUT THE HOUSE

"Which do I use for cutting a bit of tin?"

The soda race

continued from page 18

road in ordered bands, ushered by their teachers. A Chinaman and his family set off strings of crackling firecrackers.

None of the panoply affected Tad cheerfully, as it would have if his duty were not so solemn and obligatory. His bad foot was pulsing in his boot like a thing that was caged. But he could not take off his boot, even though he ran better in bare feet.

He was afraid, and it built a wall around him. He hardly heard or saw those who tried to encourage him, or give him advice. He was alone For a moment, he saw and acknowledged his opponent, the swarthy man with the long thin black moustache and calves like hills and crevices of iron.

The man wore a red shirt that came to his elbows, and long black running drawers with a red stripe down the sides, and fine black running shoes. He grinned when he looked at Tad, tall, thin, in his boots and denim.

Dan Trellis was rubbing Tad's back. "You feel all right, boy?"

"Yes, Mr. Trellis."

"Good boy, good boy. Tad, don't that stranger get you mad, boy?"

"I don't have to be mad, Mr. Trellis."

"Good boy, good boy."

The constable took out his big pistol and walked to the starting line. "Ladies and gentlemen, we're having us a big race. Tad, I don't have to tell you the honour of the town is at stake. I want to warn you not to get in the way of the runners! Now—you men ready down there with the string?"

About two hundred yards away, the men with the string at the finish line shouted back. The constable turned to the runners. "Now, you runners, just get lined up there and wait for my signals. Anybody jumps the gun, the race starts over."

The runners got ready, Tad striking a pose like a pugilist, one foot back, one forward, and his arms the same way; the professional got down on his toes, legs bent, one back, his head stretched forward like a turtle's.

"Set!" shouted the constable, immensely enjoying himself.

There was a long moment of suspense as the constable deliberately aimed his pistol at the bland sky. Then came the shot. . . .

Tad was shocked by the quick getaway of the professional runner. He was suddenly a red-shirted blur ahead of Tad. Tad felt as if something was dragging inside him.

Each time his right boot struck down a jolt of pain came to his brain. The world became dizzy and cleared and became dizzy again as the pain blurred him and woke him again with a knife-like clarity.

Ahead of Tad the red-shirted runner turned around and took steps backwards, waving Tad on.

Soda. The distant string was baking soda. Tad knew this, but the hope was dimming in him. His bad foot became a hard shriek along his leg and then a bumping numbness.

He felt the blood in his boot and heard the sound of it as it was forced upward while he ran. He wondered how he had ever had joy in running.

Cheers sounded in his ears. Then the sounds faded and he was alone with himself and with the man in front of him. There was no other life. These few moments were all of existence. The man in front of him turned again, with a grinning smile.

Run, *run*.

There was nothing else. The essential purpose no longer lived. There was only the wish to win. Tad strode out deeply, with the pain forgotten and with only running in his mind now.

The string. Vaguely he knew it was there. He was nothing but motion and his mind was closed.

Then he knew he would drop. But he pumped on, waiting for the fall and the darkness that he knew would come.

But ahead of him the red-shirted figure was breaking the string.

He awoke. The ceiling was corrugated iron. He knew he was in the barber shop, the hospital, or the saloon. Dan Trellis was looking down at him.

"Mr. Trellis, Mr. Trellis, I'm sorry."

"Boy, you had a bad leg. You ran with a bad leg. That's enough, boy."

Doc said: "We're fixin' it up."

Dan Trellis said: "Folks saw the blood atop your boot and staining it when you was laying there.. I'd told 'em, but they didn't know how bad it was."

Tad said: "Doc, I have to get back tomorrow."

Doc said: "Your leg's bad, but you can go home. But you keep off that foot as much as you can, hear?"

"Boy," said Trellis. "I'm getting that soda for you."

"No, Mr. Trellis. I didn't win."

"You got credit now," said Dan Trellis. "You and your folks are goin' to stay here and make a crop. Son, I'm as sure of that as I can be."

"But I lost the money, Mr. Trellis."

Tad saw other faces above him: Sam and Martha Hawksworth. Big Sam smoothed Tad's forehead.

Dan Trellis said: "Don't worry yourself about that, son. Don't worry over it. People learned a sight about courage today and that's a big thing to learn. Why, boy, there won't be a town if there ain't no farms."

Big Sam was leaning over him and Martha bent and kissed him.

"Folks have been talking," said Big Sam. "Now Martha and me, we figure that if you'd do what you did to get your family a measure of soda, why, we can do our best to get a farm."

At first light in the morning Tad hitched up and faced his wagon to the north. Four other wagons faced with him; the Hawksworths, the Tabors, the Morrisons and the Fishers.

Hawksworth grinned and said: "We're all waitin'."

It took a few moments before Tad understood, with great embarrassment, that he had an honorary job to do. Then he whipped his reins, his team pulled forward and he cried: "Wagons ho!" And the others broke with him, back towards their farms.

The four families peeled off behind him during the day towards their abandoned houses.

Finally it was late afternoon and Tad saw a patch of dust to the north-west, going in the same direction that he was going. Soon he saw that it was two horsemen riding hard. It could only be Pa and Joe. And he knew they wouldn't come so fast, and shouting, if they didn't have money in their saddle-bags.

Ma and Hannah would be watching for their men and their boy. And then Tad saw them come out of the house and turn, watching and waving in both directions. He sent the team into a gallop, so Ma and Hannah would know that he had succeeded, too.

Tad came closer and Pa swept off to the side on the plain and came rushing in like an Indian, shouting and holding up a small fruit tree.

Ma cried out with joy and everything became blurred for a while when they all met and hugged and danced.

And Tad thought: *It's true, we're not going to leave here. We're going to have a big farm and trees.*

And he was right. THE END

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DECISION—3

A man who insists upon seeing with perfect clearness before he decides, never decides.

Amiel

No place like it

continued from page 14

hold anybody to myself again . . . that sooner or later you'll all go off and leave me, John and Ann—and you. I try not to say or do anything to make any of you cross with me."

I wanted to yell that Jack was a louse, always had been and always would be; that he'd just muscled in to mess things up for me and like a fool I'd let him, and like a fool she'd helped him. But she was so upset it was no use saying anything, and that's how the Jacks of the world get away with it.

The boy was studiously inclined and, without pushing myself, I tried to take an interest in his studies. We went to museums and places of interest together and were remote with each other.

Janet was making it difficult, too; thwarted in her attempts to unleash a spate of affection on young John, she transferred it to me, and in front of the boy. It made me uncomfortable and I saw him watching us resentfully. He might have been too much of a boy to want to be made a fuss of himself, but he was man enough to resent some other chap coming in for it.

I hinted to Janet to lay off the worshipping act—to try to treat me more as one of the crowd; to pull me up occasionally if she felt like it. . . .

And, by glory, one morning at breakfast she took me at my word.

I had the paper in front of me and was passing a cup of tea to young John and we muffed it and the tea spilled and the cup smashed on the floor.

JANET stood up and I thought she was going to rush off for another cup. But she didn't; she just went for me like an angry lioness.

"You clumsy loon," she said. "Look at it—all over the clean tablecloth, and one of my best cups broken!"

"It was an accident," I growled, forgetting for a moment that this was only an act for young John's benefit.

"Accident," she stormed. "Why can't you take your fat head out of the paper when you're passing things?"

"It was my fault really," said young John, nobly.

"It was," agreed Janet, whirling on him, "and another thing, while we're about it, my boy—it wouldn't do you any harm to keep your room a bit tidier and to put your clothes away. I'm not your valet."

"Pigs," put in Ann, "should be kept in a pigsty."

"You mind your own business," said John, turning on her.

"I'll say what I like," shrieked young Ann, and they went at it hammer and tongs, until Janet and I couldn't hear the choice words we were throwing, and I turned and yelled to the kids to shut up.

"That's right," said Janet, "you're hateful—all of you. I don't know what I've done to have such people about me. I'm going to my room and you can look after yourselves for the rest of the day." And off she went.

"Why don't you keep that boy in order?" demanded Ann loftily of me. "I'm going off to my riding school. I hope you'll all be better tempered when I return."

John and I looked at each other.

"Fancy Mum busting out at you like that," he said. "I mean—I thought you two were—well, you know—and all that. I didn't mind her having a swipe at me. In a way I liked it. It was much more natural than that old long-suffering way of hers; you know—*Mother is grieved, but Mother is understanding, and Mother forgives.* That always makes you feel such a cad."

"I suppose," I said, looking at the wreck of the breakfast table, "she had cause. Let's do something about the cloth. We have to stick it in cold water or something."

We cleared the table and washed up, as a token of repentance. The women were still behind the barricades.

"Surrey's at the Oval," I said, looking at the paper. "Shall we go and watch them?"

"Let's," said John.

I called upstairs that we were going to the Oval and would get something to eat there.

"Very well," said Janet's voice, very coldly—she was certainly putting on a pretty convincing act for young John's benefit.

"Drop dead, pigs," recommended Ann from behind her door.

"Ann," came Janet's voice, sharp and commanding. "That's enough of that."

There was a startled hush from behind Ann's door.

"Sorry, Mummy," said a meek voice.

"Gosh," said John, looking at me round-eyed.

As it happened, it was a sparkling day's cricket and we ate sandwiches and drank soft drinks and a couple of cups of tea each. Presently I met one of the team I'd come up against previously in Australia and John was impressed when I got his autograph.

ON the way home I stopped at a florist's and got some flowers. "Peace offering," I explained.

"I hopped in and got this for Ann while I was waiting," said John, producing a small box of sweets. "She's not a bad kid—for a girl. After all, it isn't much of a life being a woman—although I suppose they get used to it."

"I shouldn't wonder," I said.

"It's been a wonderful day," he said in a small voice as we drew up. "Thanks a lot."

"There'll be plenty of other days, John," I promised. "Perhaps one day I'll be watching you at the Oval."

Janet was in her room and I expected to find her in tears. But she was radiant and togged up in her prettiest frock.

I gave her the flowers and she went starry-eyed, doing all the old stuff, "Bill, you shouldn't," and catching fondly at the sleeve of my coat.

"It worked," I reported. "John accepts me as one of the family."

She smiled. "Did you think I was putting on an act?" she said. "I wasn't. I just came over really furious with you and the kids. And I simply let rip. Then afterwards, when I thought I'd be all upset, I wasn't. Instead I got a tremendous kick out of it. It was as if something dark that's been clouding my mind had rolled away. Bill, what happened?"

"You've got over things at last," I said. "You're just a natural, healthy-minded woman again."

"I've got a natural, healthy-minded appetite," she said. "Supposing you take me to dinner somewhere special."

"Let's," I said. "But what about the youngsters?"

Janet said, with an odd little smile: "Oh, we mustn't tie ourselves down for them. They can look after themselves." THE END

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"I'm having a bet with myself that *homo sapiens* is printed on the other side of that board"

Triumph in the west

continued from page 20

and, this time, destroy them. After that, Hitler felt he could deal with the remaining Americans to the south as he had dealt with the French after Dunkirk.

Once the Western Allies had been driven from the Continent, his new submarines, jet-fighters and rockets would force their discredited statesmen to sue for peace.

The point chosen for the assault was the same hilly and wooded Ardennes across which the first *blitzkrieg* had been launched. Here, owing to Eisenhower's dividing his main forces between the Ruhr and Saar, four American divisions were guarding nearly a hundred miles of front.

Against them, in the utmost secrecy, Hitler had concentrated twenty-eight divisions or nearly 400,000 men, including ten armoured divisions, with another six divisions ready to attack farther south—a larger striking force than he had been able to assemble on any front since the Allies had struck in the Mediterranean two years before.

On December 12, the day on which Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff tried to persuade Eisenhower to regroup his forces, the Führer had harangued his generals at a secret meeting place. Stripped of their weapons and briefcases and with armed S.S. guards standing behind them, they listened for two hours to his final orders and an impassioned justification of his policy.

Four days later, at dawn on Saturday the sixteenth, the Germans struck. By nightfall, before Bradley and Eisenhower at their distant headquarters had realized what was happening, they had broken through on a wide front. By the next morning the Panzers were pouring through a fifty-mile gap with broken American units flying in confusion before them. That evening the enemy were twenty miles inside Belgium.

Brooke wrote in his diary:

"December 19. Eisenhower seems quite confident, and so do his staff, that they can deal with this situation. I only hope that this confidence is not based on ignorance.

"December 20. Received telegram from Monty which showed clearly that the situation in France was serious."

Montgomery's telegram had begun with the ominous words: "The situation in American area is not—not—good. There is a definite lack of grip and control and no one has a clear picture as to situation. . . .

"Bradley is still at Luxembourg but I understand he is moving, as his headquarters are in danger. I have no information as to where he is moving. I presume Ike is at Rheims but I have heard nothing from him or Bradley. . . . I have myself had no orders or requests of any sort. My own opinion is that . . . the American forces have been cut clean in half and the Germans can reach the Meuse at Namur without any opposition. The Command set-up has always been very faulty and now is quite futile, with Bradley at Luxembourg and the front cut in two.

"I have told Whiteley [Major-General John Whiteley, a British member of the staff at Shaef] that Ike ought to place me in operational command of all troops on the northern half of the front. I consider he should be given a direct order by someone to do so."

On the advice of Bedell Smith and despite Bradley's protests, Eisenhower acted as Montgomery wished. He contacted the British commander on the morning of the twentieth by telephone.

"He was very excited," Montgomery reported, "and it was difficult to understand what he was talking about; he roared into the telephone, speaking very fast. The only point I really grasped was that 'it seems to me we have now two fronts' and that I was to assume command of the Northern front. This was all I wanted to know."

Montgomery, who had already taken steps of his own to guard the British Army's exposed flank and rear, wasted no time in assuming control of the cut-off American forces. In a telegram to Brooke that night he described how, within two hours of his talk with Eisenhower, he visited the commanders of the First and Ninth Armies; a British officer who was present said that he strode into Hodge's H.Q. "like Christ come to cleanse the temple."

Montgomery's assumption of the northern command took place only just in time. At dawn on the twenty-first twelve fresh German divisions, seven of them armoured, were flung against the American First Army, whose tired, battered units had been fighting back, with supreme gallantry but little co-ordination or direction from above, in an attempt to stem the tide where they stood.

For though the full force of the assault had fallen, as Hitler had intended, on the Americans, its real objective was the encirclement of the British and northern forces whose life-line ran through the Belgian port.

For a week after the break-through the thick wintry weather upon which Hitler depended for victory continued, grounding the Allied air forces.

On December 23, two days before Christmas, the blanket of cloud and fog over the confused battlefield lifted and the Allied air forces went into the attack. While Montgomery, restraining the impatience of his American subordinates, waited until he had built up an adequate striking force and steadily edged the German columns away from the Meuse crossings south-westwards where they could do no harm, thousands

DECISION—4

Indecision is the chief element of success.

Ambrose Bierce

Triumph in the west

continued from previous page

of bombers and fighters harried Rundstedt's armour and communications and made his supply position, always precarious, impossible.

Thanks to the American fighting man's tenacity and the British Commander-in-Chief's prescience, the Panzers never reached the Allied petrol dumps where they were to have refuelled for the final drive across the Belgian plain and, for lack of oil, ground slowly to a standstill in the snowclad foothills to the south and east of the Meuse.

By the twenty-sixth, though in sight of the river, their advance was at an end; by the thirtieth, though Montgomery was still not yet ready to counter-attack, they had begun to yield ground. Hitler's eleventh-hour throw for victory had failed. . . .

Ignored the rules

There was no doubt that the Americans had had a severe shock. Their commanders had chosen to ignore the two most elementary rules of war—concentration and the possession of a reserve to counter the enemy's moves and keep the initiative. As a result, though Germany was all but broken, she had been able, like a wounded tiger, to inflict on them grave injuries. Their casualties had amounted to over 75,000 men, nearly 30,000 of them killed or missing.

But the British, who had so repeatedly warned them, had a worse shock and took longer to recover from it. With their manpower and resources all but exhausted after five years of war and with no possibility at all of making good further losses, they had staked everything on an early victory in the West and had seen it, as they felt, thrown away by the inexperience of the American High Command.

The war, instead of ending in 1944, had been prolonged into another year.

On January 16, exactly a month after the Ardennes break-through, Montgomery's and Bradley's forces, battling their way from north and south against stubborn German resistance, met at Houffalize and sealed off the breach in the Allied lines. Two days later Hodges's First Army reverted to Bradley's army group, leaving only the American Ninth Army under Montgomery's command. Meanwhile, so the latter felt though perhaps unjustly, under pressure from his American lieutenants—almost as eager now to beat the British Commander-in-Chief to the post as to avenge themselves on the Germans—Eisenhower had again begun to wobble.

Three days before the junction of his own and Bradley's army groups, Montgomery had sent Brooke the details of the plan for the forthcoming offensive in the north—Operation Veritable—which he had agreed, or thought he had agreed, with Eisenhower. As it was essential to wrest the initiative from the enemy as soon as possible, and as, after their heavy losses of the past month, the American First and Third Armies did not seem strong enough to break through the Siegfried Line, everything was not to be put into Montgomery's attempt, to close on, then to cross, the Rhine north of the Ruhr.

Eisenhower, Montgomery assured the C.I.G.S., was delighted with the plan and liked it very much.

On January 16, the plan was discussed at Shaef Headquarters: a wholly American meeting, he reported, except for the presence of Major-General Whiteley. To meet national susceptibilities it was proposed that the American divisions under Montgomery's command should be cut from sixteen to twelve and that the deficiency should be met by Bradley's and Hodges's First Army taking over part of 21 Army Group's line and so having a small share in the operation. With these modifications, to which the British Commander-in-Chief agreed, Whiteley assured him there would be no further trouble about the Command and that the American Ninth Army and the whole conduct of operations would be entrusted to him.

Yet though the plan as modified was approved by Shaef, and the British Commander-in-Chief on January 18 had what he described as "a fine conference with Bradley" in which agreement was reached, by the twentieth all was in the melting-pot again.

On that day an alarmed Montgomery reported to the C.I.G.S. that he had received a directive, dated the eighteenth, which, far from being in accordance with what he supposed had been agreed, showed that Bradley was once more "going off on his own line" and that, "instead of one firm, clear and decisive plan, there was great indecision and patchwork."

Instead of closing down the Ardennes counter-offensive so that his forces could be regrouped in order to launch Veritable on February 10, the Supreme Commander was now proposing to continue the Ardennes battle till the first week in February and to do "a great many other things" which, in Montgomery's view, would result, as before, in his not being strong enough at the place that really mattered.

"Both Ike and Bradley are emphatic that we should not—not—cross the Rhine in strength anywhere until we are lined up along its entire length from Nijmegen to Switzerland. If we work on this plan we shall take a long time to get anywhere."

On Monday, January 22—a week before the proposed meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Malta—the C.I.G.S. received Eisenhower's appreciation of his plans.

Wrote Alanbrooke:

"January 22. Eisenhower's appreciation was in. It leaves us again with a most confused picture; still hankering after the Frankfurt line of advance and in the end backing both and being insufficiently strong for either.

"January 26. . . . Monty came to lunch and I had a good talk with him. The old trouble keeps turning round and round in his head. Lack of organization of command on the part of the Americans and their failure to concentrate their effort on the vital point.

"January 27 and 28. Quiet Saturday at home and a call in the evening, stating that owing to bad weather departure had been put off. Sunday, motored up after dinner to complete final arrangements in anticipation of early departure tomorrow morning.

"January 29. Malta. We left Northolt at 9 a.m. A poisonously cold morning, driving through a snow-covered Hyde Park in half darkness. I loathed this idea of launching myself into cold space and longed to be able to remain at home! However, we had a wonderful trip mostly in brilliant sunshine. By 3 p.m. we had landed.

"January 30. C.O.S. meeting at 10 a.m. to decide on our line of action. At 12 noon we met the Americans to decide on the times of our meetings and the programme.

"The P.M. arrived last night at 4 a.m. and at once developed a temperature. However, it dropped again later on and he moved out to his cruiser, where he is now."

That day's discussions with the Americans had begun with the C.I.G.S., who was in the chair, explaining the British objections to the proposals for two main thrusts as set out in Eisenhower's appreciation.

The new draft directive to the Supreme Commander, which they had prepared for the consideration of their American colleagues, read:

"(*a*) All the resources which can be made available for offensive operations should be concentrated on one main thrust.

"(*b*) If tactical considerations allow, this main thrust should be made in the north, in view of the overriding importance to the enemy of the Ruhr area.

"(*c*) The best results will be achieved if one land force commander, directly responsible to you, is given power of operational control and co-ordination of all ground forces employed in the main thrust."

To this the American Chiefs of Staff, who were attended by Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Bedell Smith, replied that, while accepting the British contention that the main thrust should be in the north, they considered that both

Answers to Everybody's Puzzling See page 39

QUIZZLE

Quotation: Ships that pass in the night And speak each other in passing. (Longfellow)
Clue Down: Pull the communication cord.
Clues Across: (A) Pasha; (B) Urchin; (C) Lipstick; (D) Lethal; (E) Twostep; (F) Hamster; (G) Eskimo; (H) Cenotaph; (I) Obscenity; (J) Megaphone; (K) Manhattan; (L) Undine; (M) Nonstop; (N) Inertia; (O) Chickweed; (P) Anzac; (Q) Touchwood; (R) Ingot; (S) Ochre; (T) Neuter; (U) Cardigan; (V) Outspan; (W) Russian; (X) Dugong.

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

The difference between walking down 16 steps and 24 steps—i.e., 8 steps—results in a difference in time of 35 seconds less 25 seconds; i.e., 10 seconds. Therefore it must take 10 seconds for 8 steps to descend, or 1¼ seconds per step. Now when I walk 16 steps I must save 16 × 1¼ seconds, or 20 seconds. This, added to 35 seconds, shows that it would take me 55 seconds to do the journey without walking. In 55 seconds I could walk 55 divided by 1¼ steps, giving 44 as the number of steps on the escalator.

EVERYBODY'S CROSSWORD (No. 8)

by Leslie Stokes

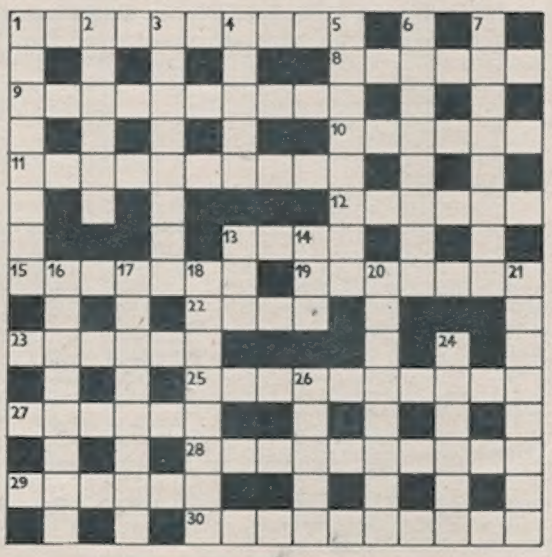
A prize of a one-guinea Book Token will be given for each of the first three correct solutions opened. Entries must be marked "Crossword No. 8" on the envelope and must be posted to reach this office (John Bull: Everybody's Weekly, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1) by Tuesday, January 5. No correspondence can be entered into about this puzzle.

ACROSS

1. Beefeater's opposite number? (10)
8. Alternatively ticked off as a flower. (6)
9. Medusa taking on the champion of Dreyfus? Cheese it! (10)
10. Skin disease from a different sphere. (6)
11. Is sober out, for a change, but by no means sedate. (10)
12. Just a matter of twisting raffia. (6)
13. Box—with a piece of timber. (4)
15. Drink that could be an ill wind, albeit slight. (7)
19. Has cunning, though without a head would be done for. (7)
22. Observers normally working in pairs. (4)
23. What irate motorists do at the lights. (3, 3)
25. They're from mild-mannered families, it seems. (10)
27. Colour described patchily in writing. (6)
28. On the look-out for a learned fellow in the East Midlands. (10)
29. No bail could upset one of unusual type. (6)
30. Description in support of a folding-table. (4-6)

DOWN

1. Idle wanderer having something to tie him down finally. (8)
2. Plant of pungent flavour. (6)
3. Going bad fits to a T for a start in this sport. (8)
4. It's something to get out of Alcatraz or Sing-Sing. (5)
5. Used to float the first limited company? (5, 3)
6. Contemptuous. (8)
7. You can't touch him for energy. (4-4)
13. End of a dynasty. (3)
14. Beastly provider of shagreen. (3)
16. Thus Don Quixote might have surveyed a crowded French street. (8)
17. As bad debts will ever be. (8)
18. Does this creature pig it, by the way, in country lanes? (8)
20. One who, perforce, has limitations. (8)



21. Challenged about Scottish knowledge being obscured. (8)
24. Food a cool cat might regard archly. (3-3)
26. It comes in the tax. (5)

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD No. 4

ACROSS: 1, *Perspicacity.* 10, *Haricot.* 11, *Quarrel.* 12, *Arithmetic.* 13, *Fair.* 14, *Restrung.* 15, *Atomic.* 18, *Canine.* 20, *Surgical.* 23, *Iona.* 24, *Dinner hour.* 26, *Ill-will.* 27, *Scorpio.* 28, *Stratosphere.*

DOWN: 2, *Earwigs.* 3, *Saccharin.* 4, *In the end.* 5, *Acquit.* 6, *Iran.* 7, *Yardarm.* 8, *Theatre critic.* 9, *Clerical error.* 16, *Tiger-Moth.* 17, *Pug-noses.* 19, *Nonplus.* 21, *Chopper.* 22, *Violet.* 25, *Bier.*

THE WINNERS WERE

Mrs. H. Goodson, 16 Cromwell Road, Southampton.
Miss A. M. Willis, 94 Willingdon Road, Eastbourne.
Mr. P. B. Fowler, 32 Kirkdale View, Leeds 12.

Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to John Bull : Everybody's Weekly Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page

We advise . . .

AFTER buying a new car I ordered some seat covers for £11 19s. 6d. When these were delivered I was asked to pay another £2, as the manufacturers had increased the price. I refused to pay this extra charge, and noted that the catalogue from which I chose them hadn't been brought up to date. I maintain that if I had wanted seat covers at the extra price I would have chosen them. Can I be made to pay this charge?—Mrs. F. M., Middlesbrough, Yorks.

● You have no legal obligation to accept these covers at the increased price and could have returned them. However, by keeping them you would be presumed to have accepted them at the increased price and can be compelled to pay the balance.

TWIN EYESORE

OUR council decided to place a street lamp right in front of my house. They've put it exactly eighteen inches to the left of a telegraph pole, and together these make a real eyesore. Can I compel either the post office or the council to move their poles?—N. B., Rolleston, Burton on Trent.

● In these circumstances the post office may be prepared to move the pole to another site, but if they do so you may have to pay the cost.

This also applies to the lamp post, but unless another site, not less favourable, can be found the gas board could not be compelled to move it, unless it is causing a nuisance in the legal sense.

SPENT WITHOUT TRACE

FOR fourteen years I rented a house and during that time spent a lot of money on structural alterations at my own expense. I had all the house wired for electricity, one spare room made into a bathroom complete with hand basin, bath, gas geyser, and had new fireplaces installed in three rooms. Is any of this money recoverable?—C. P., Spinny Hill, Northampton.

● Unless the landlord agreed to compensate you for these improvements you could not succeed in a claim against him.

If the fittings were permanently attached to the house they would automatically become landlord's fixtures and as such his own property.

DEBT PAID BY TIME

FOR twenty years someone owed me a sum of money, but it is only now that I have traced him. Can I go to law to have my money returned?—E. W., Birmingham, 16.

● Unless the debt has been acknowledged in writing or anything paid on account during the past six years, it is barred by statute and is not recoverable at law.

This does not prevent you from trying to recover the money, but you cannot compel the debtor to pay.

STOP THAT STY

A NEIGHBOUR is going to keep pigs, and as I cannot stand the smell I want to find a way to restrain him.—R. G. C., Westbury, Wilts.

● There is nothing to prevent your neighbour keeping pigs, but if a nuisance is caused by them you can take legal action to have it abated.

Much will depend on the character of the neighbourhood in which you live, whether wholly residential or not, and also on the number of pigs your neighbour keeps.

H.P. DEPRECIATION

SEVERAL months after signing a hire purchase agreement to buy a car I terminated it under a clause which said that after half the total was paid the hirer could give notice in writing to the hire purchase company. I received a receipt for the car. Later my grandmother, my guarantor, had a letter from the company saying that I could still buy the car for £52, otherwise it would be sold. Now we have had another letter, saying the car was sold for £47, and that the company was claiming the difference in the amount from her. Must we pay this money?—R. F., Cardiff.

● There might have been a clause in the agreement which said you were liable for any loss in value of the car, despite the fact that you cancelled the hiring.

If there was no such clause you are not liable for this amount.

BILL OR ACT?

CAN you tell me if the bill which makes children whose parents could not marry before their birth but have since done so legitimate has been passed?—Mrs. K. W., London, E.17.

● The Legitimacy Act 1959 came into operation on September 1, 1959.

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD

I WAS going to a job for my employer on my own scooter when I skidded on an icy road and caused a fair amount of damage to the vehicle. My employer says that he will not pay for the damage. Am I right in thinking that it is his responsibility?—R. A. W., Doncaster, Yorks.

● No claim against your employer for the damage could succeed unless there is evidence to show that the accident was caused through his negligence.

In the circumstances you state, the damage seems to have been caused by a pure accident and your employer has no liability.

AERIAL WARFARE?

WHEN I bought my house the previous tenant left his TV aerial on the chimney, saying I could have it for £6. As I was in some financial difficulty he said the payment could be at my convenience. Now he has sent me a bill for the money. Must I pay this? I never signed an agreement to buy the aerial.—J. J., Prescot, Lancs.

● If you accepted the offer the aerial is now yours and you can be compelled to pay for it.

If you did not accept the offer, you can ask the former owner of the house to remove it.

The fact that you did not agree in writing does not affect your liability if you agreed verbally.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS keeps practical homelovers up to date

▶ **Multi-purpose steel strip:** A new steel strip of interest to the "do-it-yourself" enthusiast for repair work of all kinds, or for making anything from an angle bracket to a rack for holding tools, has been brought on to the market. The strip is notched at 1 in. intervals for easy bending, cutting off and measuring, and is bored with 5/32 in. dia. holes to take ¼ in. dia. bolts or screws.

Made of rust-proofed mild steel there is a colour choice of red or green. Addyco steel strip costs 1s. 3d. per 18-in. length; also available in 6-ft. lengths electro-galvanized at 5s. By Addy Product (Sales), Ltd., Millbrook Trading Estate, Southampton.

▶ **Easy strainer:** Avoid burning your fingers when straining vegetables by using the Nutbrown draining saucepan lid. When the vegetables are ready, substitute this lid for the normal one and pour off the boiling water through the tiny outlets in the lid.

Made of rust-proof metal and fitted with a plastic knob, the hinged handle fits over the handle of the saucepan. The lid is ridged to fit any 6-8 in. saucepan. Price 5s. 11d. By Thomas M. Nutbrown, Ltd., Walker Street, Blackpool.

▶ **Treating scorch marks:** If you scorch a garment while ironing, rinse the scorched portion immediately in cold water, then lay flat and dab with a wad of cotton wool dipped in diluted household bleach. So long as the fibres have not been damaged this will remove the scorch.

▶ **Drum attachment for power tools:** Latest Surform power tool attachment is a 2-in. drum-shaped blade suitable for planing, shaping, bevelling or rebating all kinds of wood, which can be used freehand or in conjunction with a drill stand or a bench clamp. The cutting edge is on the side of the drum and cuttings pass through holes in the blade and are cleared automatically.

A planing and rebating attachment, which sells separately, converts the drum to enable ⅝ × ⅝ in. rebates to be cut quickly and accurately. The 2-in. drum itself costs 15s. 6d. complete with adaptor assembly, and the planing and rebating attachment costs £1 15s. By Simmonds Aerocessories, Ltd., Surform Division, Stornoway House, Cleveland Row, London, S.W.1.

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the Supreme Commander's past operations and his future plan were designed for this end.

"The southern advance," they argued, "was not intended to compete with the northern advance, but must be of sufficient strength to draw off German forces to protect the important Frankfurt area and to provide an alternate line of attack."

Brooke and his colleagues agreed that this placed quite a different interpretation on Eisenhower's appreciation. It was therefore agreed that the British Chiefs of Staff and Bedell Smith should redraft the Supreme Commander's appreciation to make it conform more closely to the meaning which his Chief of Staff assured them it had.

This revision was telegraphed to Eisenhower, who at once accepted it. In replying to Bedell Smith he wired: "You may assure the Combined Chiefs of Staff that I will seize the Rhine crossings in the north immediately this is a feasible operation and without waiting to close the Rhine throughout its length." But to this he added the rider: "I will advance across the Rhine in the north with maximum strength and complete determination as soon as the situation in the south allows me to collect the necessary forces and do this without incurring unnecessary risks."

So suspicious had the British become as a result of past disappointments that they feared that even this sentence would be used as an excuse for further procrastination.

This now almost undisguised lack of faith in Eisenhower's judgment was intensely resented by the Americans and particularly by Marshall.

Brooke's diary continued:

"January 31. I attended a large dinner party with John Cunningham in the house of the C.-in-C., Mediterranean, Nelson's old headquarters. I felt swept off into the old ages, imagining him there with his romance and his wars.

"Returned here and was just off to bed when Bedell Smith came in and we had at least an hour's talk trying to find some settlement to the difference that lies between us. I think that the talk did both of us good and may help in easing the work tomorrow.

"It has been a long day with much work and I am feeling very tired and old."

"My talk with Bedell Smith," Brooke recalled after the war, "had at any rate shown me that he was quite able to appreciate the dangers of Ike's strategy, and I felt satisfied that he would use his influence to guide him."

The C.I.G.S.'s distrust of Eisenhower as a commander sprang from the readiness with which in the past he had been deflected from his objective by the views of others. The very sympathy with which he listened to all-comers—one of the qualities that made him such a unique co-ordinator of Allied differences—left him dangerously open to the latest comer's suggestion.

It was the fear that he would again dissipate his resources that made Brooke depart from his normal rule of leaving a commander in the field a free hand. But if Bedell Smith, a far abler soldier in the C.I.G.S.'s view than Eisenhower, now realized the need for concentration in the north, there was far less danger of Bradley and Patton being allowed to turn the secondary thrust towards Frankfurt into a major operation capable of stifling the main offensive.

For, unlike Bradley, Bedell Smith was at Eisenhower's shoulder and was always entrusted by him with the drafting and execution of his plans.

And as the rest of the campaign in the West was to prove, Bedell Smith had learned his lesson.

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NEXT WEEK: The days that led to victory

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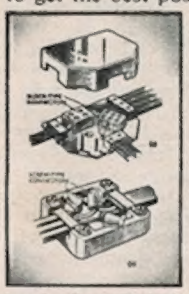

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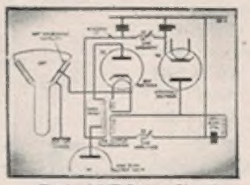

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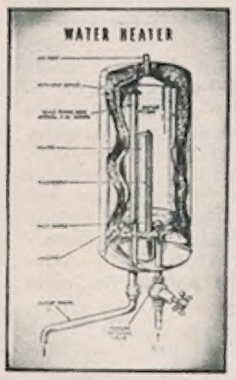

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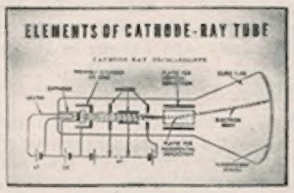

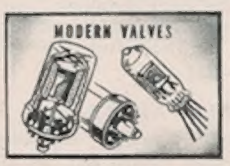

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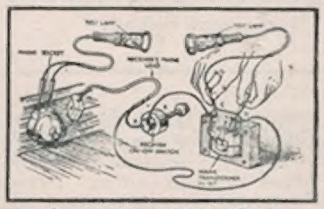

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